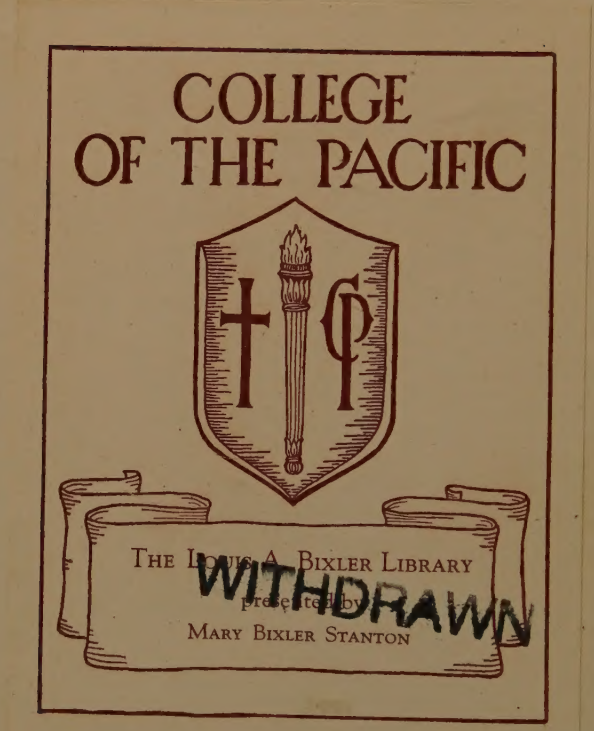
REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY

BY HIS SON COUNT ILYA TOLSTOY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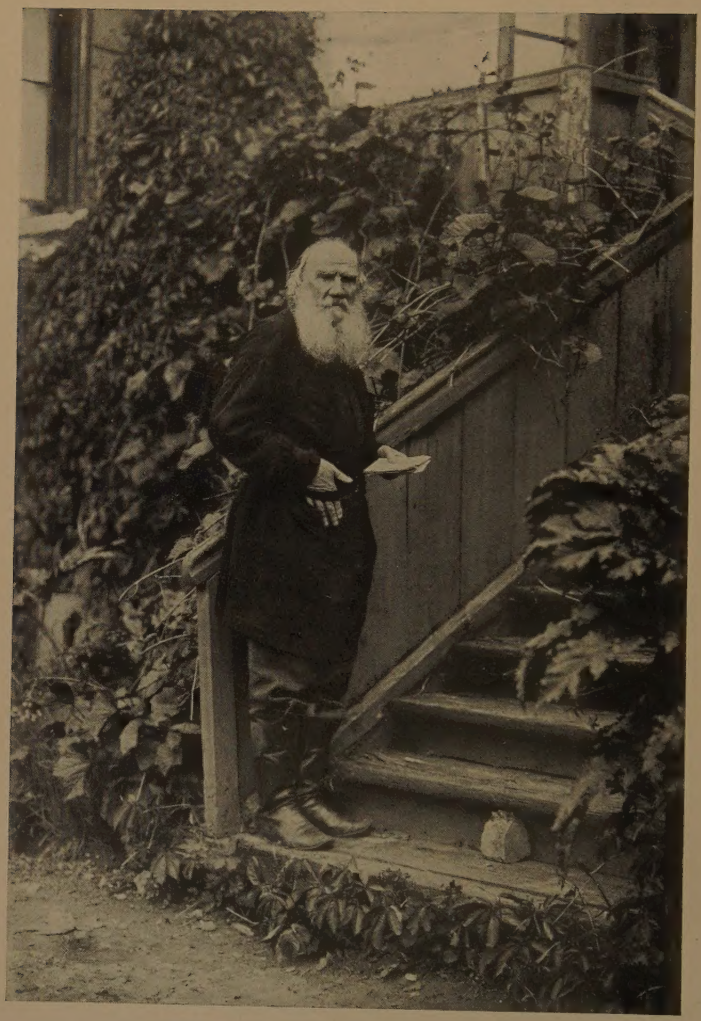
To my beloved Lancy,

From

His sister Minnie.

Xmas 1914.

REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY



TOLSTOY—A CHARACTERISTIC POSE

College of the Pacific
Stockton, Calif.

REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY

BY HIS SON COUNT ILYA TOLSTOY

Il'ia L'vovich Tolstoĭ

TRANSLATED BY
GEORGE CALDERON

Illustrated with
Numerous Photographs

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REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY

REMINISCENCES OF TOLSTOY

CHAPTER I

DESCRIPTION OF THE CHARACTERS OF HIS CHILDREN, FROM ONE OF MY FATHER'S LETTERS. IMPRESSIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD. MY MOTHER, FATHER, GRANDMOTHER, HANNAH, THE THREE DUNYÁSHAS. LESSONS. THE SCHOOL.

IN one of his letters to his father's cousin, Alexándra Andréyevna Tolstoy, my father gives the following description of his children:

The eldest (Sergéi) is fair-haired and good-looking; there is something weak and patient in his expression and very gentle. His laugh is not infectious, but when he cries, I can hardly refrain from crying too. Every one says he is like my eldest brother.[1]

I am afraid to believe it. It is too good to be true. My brother's chief characteristic was neither egotism nor self-renunciation but a strict mean between the two: he never sacrificed himself for any one else, but always avoided, not only injuring others, but also interfering with them. He kept his happiness and his sufferings entirely to himself. Seryózha (Sergéi) is clever; he has a systematic mind and is sensitive to artistic impressions, does his lessons splen-

[1] Nikolái.

didly, is athletic and lively at games, but gauche and absent-minded. He lacks independent-mindedness; is a slave to his physical condition; according to whether he is well or unwell he is two quite different boys. . . .

Ilyá, the third, has never been ill in his life; broad-boned, white and pink, radiant, bad at lessons. Is always thinking about what he is told not to think about. Invents his own games. Hot-tempered and "violent," [2] wants to fight at once; but is also tender-hearted and very sensitive. Sensuous; fond of eating and lying still doing nothing. When he eats currant-jelly and buck-wheat *kasha* [3] his lips itch. Independent-minded in everything. When he cries, is vicious and horrid at the same time; when he laughs every one laughs too. Everything forbidden delights him; he recognizes it at once.

Not long ago when I was writing stories for my "Alphabet" [4] he concocted one of his own: "A boy asked, 'Does God also . . .?' As a punishment, for the rest of his life, God made the boy . . ." If I die, Ilyá will come to grief, unless he has some stern guardian whom he loves to lead him by the hand.

In the summer we used to ride out to bathe; Seryózha went on horseback by himself and I took Ilyá on the saddle in front of me. I went out one morning and found both waiting. Ilyá with his hat on, bath-towel and all complete, in the best of spirits. Seryózha came running up from somewhere, out of breath and hatless. "Find your hat or I won't take you." Seryózha ran hither and thither; there

[2] "Violent." Tolstoy uses the French or English word.

[3] *Kasha*, a kind of dry porridge.

[4] The "Alphabet" published in 1872 in four parts, besides an illustrated alphabet and a syllabary, contains several tales and fables, together with extracts from various church and secular books.

YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

THE GATES OF YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

was no hat to be found. "There 's nothing for it; I won't take you without a hat; serve you right, it 's a lesson; you 're always losing things." He was on the verge of tears. I rode off with Ilyá and waited to see if he would show he was sorry for his brother. Not a bit. He beamed with happiness and chatted about the horse. My wife found Seryózha in tears. She searched for the hat; it could n't be found. She guessed that her brother, who went out early to fish, had gone off with Seryózha's hat. She wrote me a note, saying that Seryózha was probably innocent about the hat and sent him to me in a cap.[5] (She had guessed right.) I heard hurried footsteps on the bridge of the bathing-place; Seryózha ran in—he had lost the note on the way—and began sobbing. Then Ilyá followed suit, and I did too, a little.

Tánya (Tatyána) is eight years old. Every one says that she is like Sonya,[6] and I believe them, although I am pleased about that too; I believe it only because it is obvious. If she had been Adam's eldest daughter and he had had no other children afterwards she would have passed a wretched childhood. The greatest pleasure that she has is to look after children. She evidently finds a physical satisfaction in holding and touching a little human body. The dream of her life, consciously by now, is to have children. The other day I drove her into Tula to have her photographed. She begged me to buy a knife for Seryózha, something else for this one, something else for that. She knows exactly what will give each the greatest pleasure. I bought nothing for her; she never thought about herself for a moment. As we were driving home I asked her:

[5] *Kartuz,* the ordinary peaked cap, yachting shape, that Russian workmen wear.

[6] Tolstoy's wife, Sófya Andréyevna.

"Are you asleep, Tánya?" "No." "What are you thinking about?" "I was thinking, when we get home, I 'll ask mama if Lyólya (Lyof) has been good, and how I 'll give him his present, and how I 'll give the others theirs, and how Seryózha will pretend he 's not a bit glad, but really will be, very." She is not very clever, she is not fond of using her mind, but she has a good mental apparatus. She will be a splendid woman if God sends her a husband. I am prepared to pay a handsome reward to any one who will turn her into a "new woman."

The fourth is Lyof. Handsome, dexterous, good memory, graceful. Any clothes fit him as if they had been made for him. Everything that others do, he does very skilfully and well. Does not understand much yet.

The fifth, Masha (Mary) is two years old, the one whose birth nearly cost Sonya her life. A weak and sickly child. Body white as milk, curly white hair; big queer blue eyes, queer by reason of their deep serious expression. Very intelligent and ugly. She will be one of the riddles; she will suffer, she will seek and find nothing; will always be seeking what is least attainable.

The sixth, Peter, is a giant, a huge delightful baby in a mobcap;[7] turns out his elbows, strives eagerly after something. My wife falls into an ecstasy of agitation and emotion when she holds him in her arms, but I am completely at a loss to understand. I know that he has a great store of physical energy, but whether there is any purpose for which the store is wanted I do not know. That is why I do not care for children under two or three—I don't understand.

[7] He died in 1873.—I. T. (The notes signed "I. T." are by the author; the rest are by the translator.)

This letter was written in 1872, when I was six years old. My recollections date from about that time, but I can remember a few things before.

For instance, I remember how my father had a heated argument with somebody about the result of the Franco-Prussian War; I remember what room this was in and by what table. But I cannot remember whom the argument was with. I was only three and a half years old.

From my earliest childhood, until the family moved into Moscow—that was in 1881—all my life was spent, almost without a break, at Yásnaya Polyána.

This was how we lived. The chief personage in the house was my mother. She settled everything. She interviewed Nikoláï, the cook, and ordered dinner; she sent us out for walks, made our shirts, was always nursing some baby at the breast; all day long she bustled about the house with hurried steps. One could be naughty with her, though she was sometimes angry and punished us.

She knew more about everything than anybody else. She knew that one must wash every day, that one must eat soup at dinner, that one must talk French, learn not to crawl about on all fours, and not to put one's elbows on the table; and if she said that one was not to go out for a walk because it was just going to rain, she was sure to be right, and one had

to do as she said. When I coughed she gave me licorice or King of Denmark drops;[8] so I was very fond of coughing. When my mother put me to bed and went upstairs to play duets with father, I found it very hard to go to sleep; I was annoyed at being left alone; so I used to start coughing and go on until nurse went and fetched mama, and I was very angry at her taking so long to come. I entirely refused to go to sleep until she had come to my rescue and measured out exactly ten drops in a wine-glass and given them to me.

Papa was the cleverest man in the world. He always knew everything. There was no being naughty with *him*. When he was up in his study "working," one was not allowed to make a noise, and nobody might go into his room. What he did when he was at "work," none of us knew. Later on, when I had learnt to read, I was told that papa was a "writer." It was like this. I was very pleased with some lines of poetry one day, and asked my mother who wrote them. She told me they were written by Pushkin, and Pushkin was a great writer. I was vexed at my father not being one, too. Then my mother said that my father was also a well-known writer, and I was very glad indeed.

At the dinner-table papa sat opposite mama and

[8] King of Denmark drops, a concoction of licorice still common in Russia as a remedy for coughs.

had his own round silver spoon. When old Natália Petróvna, who lived on the floor below, with Great-Aunt Tatyána Alexándrovna, poured herself out a glass of quass, he would pick it up and drink it right off, and then say, "Oh, I'm so sorry, Natália Petróvna; I made a mistake!" We all laughed delightedly, and it seemed odd that papa was not in the least afraid of Natália Petróvna. When there was jelly for dinner, papa said it was good for gluing paper boxes; we ran off to get some paper, and papa made it into boxes. Mama was angry, but he was not afraid of her either. We had the gayest times imaginable with him now and then. He could ride a horse better and run faster than anybody else, and there was no one in the world as strong as he was.

He hardly ever punished us, but when he looked me in the eyes he knew everything that I thought, and I was frightened. You could tell stories to mama but not to papa because he would see through you at once. So nobody ever tried.

He knew all our secrets too. When we played at houses under the lilac-bushes, we had three great secrets, which nobody knew but Seryózha, Tánya, and me. All of a sudden up came papa one day and said that he knew all our three secrets and they all began with a B, which was perfectly true. The first secret was that mama was going to have another

Baby; the second, that Seryózha was in love with a Baroness; and the third I forget.

Besides papa and mama, there was also Aunt Tatyána Alexándrovna Yergólski. She lived on the floor below, in a corner room, with Natália Petróvna, and had a big eikon with a silver mount. We were very much afraid of this eikon, because it was very old and black.

Aunt Tatyána always lay on her bed and when we visited her gave us jam out of a green jar. She was Seryózha's godmother and fonder of him than of the rest. She died soon after and we were taken down to see her, lying in her coffin, looking as if she were made of wax. There were wax candles alight about the coffin and in front of the eikon, and it was all very terrifying. Mama told us we were not to be frightened; she and papa were not; but we huddled together and kept close to mama.

The room was occupied afterwards by our grandmother, Pelagéya Ilyínitchna; she also had the black eikon and also died there.

It was a low-roofed room, and opposite the window outside was a well, enormously deep and very terrifying. Mama said we were not to go near it because one might tumble in and get drowned. A bucket fell in once and they had great difficulty in getting it out again.

Then there was an Englishwoman, Hannah, who

lived in the house. She was good-tempered and very pretty. We were fond of her and did what she told us. At Christmas, when we had the Christmas tree, she made us a "plum pudding." It was brought to the table soused in rum, all in flames. When we walked in the garden with Hannah we were very good and did not dirty ourselves on the grass; but once when they sent Dunyásha [9] out with us, we ran away among the shrubs. She called after us: "Keep on the path! Keep on the path!" So we nicknamed her Dunyásha-keep-on-the-path. Another Dunyásha was a housemaid who never could remember anything; so we called her Dunyásha-can't-remember. The third Dunyásha, wife to the bailiff Alexéy Stepánytch, was known as Dunyásha-mama-has-come-on-business.

She lived on the ground floor of the annex [10] and always kept the door locked. When we went with mama to see her, we used to knock at the door and call out, "Dunyásha, mama has come on business." Then she opened the oil-cloth door and let us in. We loved to be given tea with jam in it when we went to see her. She gave us the jam in a saucer,

[9] Dúnya, Dunyásha, is a familiar form for Avdótya, which is the Russian version of the Greek Eudoxia.

[10] The Russian word "flígel," though identical with the German "flügel," does not as a rule mean a "wing" of a house in the English sense, but a separate building of inferior splendor, immediately adjoining.

and she had only one silver spoon; it was small and thin and all chewed out of shape. We knew the reason of that; the pig found it in the rinsing-tub and chewed it up.

When I ceased to be a baby and reached the age of five, my mother began to give me reading and writing lessons. First of all I did my lessons in Russian, but after a little while in French and English. Papa himself taught me arithmetic. I had already heard of Seryózha's and Tánya's lessons and I was a good deal alarmed; for sometimes when Seryózha could not understand a thing, papa would say that he did not understand on purpose. Then Seryózha would pucker up his eyes and begin to cry. Sometimes I could not understand a thing either, and he used to get very angry with me. At the beginning of the lesson he was always good-tempered and made little jokes; but when it became difficult and he had to explain, I was frightened and could not understand a word.

When I was six, I remember my father teaching the village children. They had their lessons in "the other house," [11] where Alexéy Stepánytch, the bailiff, lived, and sometimes on the ground floor of the house we lived in.

There were a great number of these children who used to come. When they came, the front hall smelt

[11] The name we gave to the stone flígel, or annex.—I. T.

TOLSTOY AND HIS PUPILS, PEASANT CHILDREN

of sheep-skin jackets; they were taught by papa and Seryózha and Tánya and Uncle Kóstya [12] all at once. Lesson time was very gay and lively.

The children did exactly as they pleased, sat where they liked, ran about from place to place, and answered questions not one by one, but all together, interrupting one another and helping one another to recall what they had read. If one left out a bit, up jumped another and then another, and the story or sum was reconstructed by the united efforts of the whole class.

What pleased my father most about his pupils was the picturesqueness and originality of their language. He never wanted a literal repetition of bookish expressions, and particularly encouraged everything "out of your own head." I remember how he once stopped a boy who was running into the next room.

"Where are *you* off to?" he asked.

"To uncle, to bite off a piece of chalk." [13]

"Cut along, cut along! It 's not for us to teach them, but for them to teach us," he said to some one when the boy was gone. "Which of us would have

[12] Konstantin Islávin. See Chapter V.

[13] The instinct for lime, necessary to feed their bones, drives Russian children to nibble pieces of chalk or the whitewash off the wall. In this case the boy is running to one of the grown-ups about the house, probably to the *Dvornik* or yardman (every one is "Uncle" to a Russian child) to bite at a piece of the chalk he had for whitewashing.

expressed himself like that? You see he did n't say to 'get' or to 'break off' but to 'bite off,' which is right, because they do literally 'bite' off the chalk from the lump with their teeth, and don't 'break' it off."

One day my father set me to teach a boy his alphabet. I did my very best but he could n't understand it in the least. I lost my temper and hit him; he hit back, and we fought and both cried. Papa came up and told me I was not to teach any more because I did n't know how. I was naturally very angry and went and told my mother that it was n't my fault, because Tánya and Seryózha had clever boys to teach, but mine was a nasty stupid one.

CHAPTER II

THE HOUSEHOLD. NIKOLÁI THE COOK. ALEXÉY STEPÁNYTCH. AGÁFYA MIKHÁILOVNA. MÁRYA AFANÁSYEVNA. SERGÉI PETRÓVITCH.

I CAME into the world at the period when our household still consisted of those who had formerly been serfs of the family. They are all dead and buried now, but I am going to tell about them, because so many of my recollections of my childhood and of my father are bound up with them.

When my father married and brought home his young and inexperienced bride, Sófya Andréyevna, to Yásnaya Polyána, Nikolái Mikháilovitch Rumyántsef, ex-flute-player in Prince Nikolái Sergéyevitch Volkónski's orchestra of serfs, was already established as cook.

When we asked him, as children, why he had given up playing the flute, he told us he had lost the "*embouchure*,"[1] so they made him a cook. Before my father's marriage, he had a salary of five rubles a

[1] "Embouchure," a technical term; in order to play wind instruments, the player has to be able to adjust his lips in a particular way.—I. T.

month; but when my mother arrived, she raised him to six, at which rate he continued the rest of his days; that is, till somewhere about the end of the eighties.[2] He was succeeded in the kitchen by his son, Seymón Nikoláyevitch, my mother's godson, and this worthy and beloved man, companion of my childish games, still lives with us to this day. Under my mother's supervision he prepared my father's vegetarian diet with affectionate zeal, and without him, who knows? my father would very likely never have lived to the ripe old age he did. During his latter years my father never felt well except at Yásnaya, and every time he went away and had to take to a diet he was not accustomed to he was attacked by gastric troubles.

Nikolái, the father, was a typical serf, with all the serf's good and bad qualities. He was dirty and fond of liquor; he often got so drunk that his wife had to come and do the cooking for him; but his reverence for the "masters" extended to deep obeisances and he was afraid of them. He was one of those folk of the old generation—and I have met with many such in my time—who regretted the old days of serfdom and dependence, and by no means rejoiced in the Emancipation. "We were better off then," he would say; "we were strictly kept, we had to mind our P's and Q's, but they looked after

[2] His salary was raised from about nine pounds a year to eleven.

TOLSTOY AS A YOUNG MAN

us well. In the old days you knew you would never starve. But now, if they turn me out from here, and I have to leave my master, where will I go to?"

We enjoyed running into the kitchen to get him to give us hot pies or *leváshniks*. His *leváshniks* were made of pastry with jam inside. To prevent their "settling," Nikolái used to blow into them from one corner, not through a straw, but with his lips. This process was known as " les soupirs de Nicolas."

Our French teacher, Monsieur Nief, killed a *kózyula* or viper one day in the garden and cut off its head with his penknife, and in order to prove to us that its flesh was not poisonous, he resolved to fry it and eat it. We all followed him to the kitchen. He showed Nikolái Mikháilovitch the viper, which hung from his hand, and asked him, in broken Russian, to lend him a frying-pan. We peeped in from the doorway and wondered what the result would be.

For a long time Nikolái Mikháilovitch could not make out what the Frenchman wanted with him. When it dawned on him at last he picked up a cooking-shovel [3] from the corner, and brandishing it over Monsieur Nief's head, bellowed: "Get out, you heathen; I 'll teach you to defile the master's pots

[3] *Tchápelnik*, a long-handled shovel used for putting the frying-pan on the stove and lifting it off.

and pans! Away with you! The other day it was a squirrel he brought to fry, and now it 's come to a viper. Away!"

"Qu-est-ce qu'il dit? qu'est-ce qu'il dit?" asked Monsieur Nief, backing in some alarm. We were delighted, and ran away laughing to tell mama all about it.

. . . . . .

Alexéy Stepánovitch Oryékhof, also a former serf, was a peasant proprietor of Yásnaya.

When my father went to Sebastopol he took him with him as his orderly.

I remember my father telling me that during the siege he was quartered in the Fourth Bastion with a brother officer who also had a man-servant, and this man-servant was a terrible coward. When they sent him to the soldiers' mess to get the dinner,[4] he used to duck and dodge in the most ridiculous manner, to avoid the flying shells and bullets; whereas Alexéy Stepánovitch was not in the least afraid and walked boldly across.

So they gave up sending Alexéy on any errands and always sent the coward; and all the officers used to turn out to see him crawling and crouching and ducking at every step.

By my time, Alexéy Stepánovitch had become

[4] On active service, officers and men share the same mess.

bailiff or manager at Yásnaya Polyána. He and Dunyásha lived together in "the other house."

He was a grave, staid man; we had a great respect for him and wondered at papa's thee-ing and thou-ing him.

I will tell about his death later on.

. . . . . .

Agáfya Mikháilovna was an old woman who lived at first in the kitchen of "the other house" and afterwards on the home farm. Tall and thin with big, thoroughbred eyes, and long straight hair, like a witch, turning gray, she was rather terrifying, but, above all, she was queer.

Once upon a time long ago she had been housemaid to my father's grandmother, Countess Pelagéya Nikoláyevna Tolstoy, née Princess Gortchakóf. She was fond of talking about her young days.

"I was very handsome," she used to say. "When there were gentlefolks visiting at the big house, the Countess would call me, 'Gachette [Agáfya], femme de chambre, apportez-moi un mouchoir!' Then I would say, 'Toute suite, Madame la Comtesse!' And every one would stare at me and not be able to take their eyes off. When I crossed over to the Annex, there they would be, watching to catch me on the way. Many a time have I tricked them; run round the other way and jumped over the ditch. I

never liked that sort of thing any time. A maid I was, a maid I am."

After my grandmother's death, Agáfya Mikháilovna was sent on to the home farm for some reason or other, and minded the sheep. She got so fond of sheep that all her days after she never could touch mutton.

Next to the sheep, she had an affection for dogs, and that is the only period of her life that I remember her in.

There was nothing in the world she cared about but dogs. She lived with them in horrible dirt and smells and gave up her whole mind and soul to them. We always had setters, harriers, and greyhounds, and the whole kennel, often very numerous, was under Agáfya Mikháilovna's management, with some boy or other to help her, usually a very clumsy and stupid one.

There are many interesting recollections bound up with the memory of this intelligent and original woman. Most of them are associated in my mind with the stories my father told me about her. He could always catch and unravel any interesting psychological trait, and these traits, which he would mention incidentally, stuck firmly in my mind. He used to tell, for instance, how Agáfya Mikháilovna complained to him of sleeplessness.

"Ever since I can remember her, she has suffered,

THE MIDDAY MEAL

she says, from 'a birch-tree growing inside me from my belly up; it presses against my chest, and prevents my breathing.' She complained one day of her sleeplessness and the birch-tree, and said: 'There I lay all alone, and all was quiet but the clock ticking on the wall: "Who are you? What are you? Who are you? What are you?" [5] it said. And I began to think: "Who am I? What am I?" and so I spent the whole night thinking about it.'

"Why, just imagine! This is γνῶθι σεαυτόν, 'Know thyself,' this is Socrates!" added my father, telling the story with great enthusiasm.

In the summer-time my mother's brother, Styópa (Stephen Behrs), who was studying at the time in the school of jurisprudence, used to come and stay with us. In the autumn he used to go out coursing with greyhounds, with my father and us, and Agáfya Mikháilovna loved him for that.

Styópa's examination was in the spring. Agáfya Mikháilovna knew about it and anxiously waited for the news of whether he had got through.

One day she put up a candle before the eikon and prayed that Styópa might pass. But at that moment she remembered that her greyhounds had got out and had not come back to the kennels again.

" 'Saints in heaven!' I said to myself, 'they 'll get in to some place and worry the cattle and do a mis-

[5] Russian: Któ tý, tchtó tý, któ tý, tchtó tý.

chief! Lord, let my candle burn for the dogs to come back quick, and I 'll buy another for Stepán Andréyevitch.' And no sooner had I said it than I heard the dogs rattling their collars in the porch. Thank God! they had come back. You see what prayer can do."

Another favorite of Agáfya Mikháilovna was a young man, Misha Stakhóvitch,[6] who often stayed with us.

"See what you have been and done to me, little Countess!" she said reproachfully to my sister Tánya: "You 've introduced me to Mikháil Alexándrovitch and I 've fallen in love with him in my old age, like a wicked woman!"

On the fifth of February, her name-day,[7] Agáfya Mikháilovna received a telegram of congratulation from Stakhóvitch.

When my father heard of it he said jokingly to Agáfya Mikháilovna: "Are n't you ashamed that a man had to trudge two miles through the frost at night, all for the sake of your telegram?"

[6] Mikháil Alexándrovitch Stakhóvitch, born in 1861, a landowner of Oryól Province. Now one of the foremost politicians of Russia: Member of the First and Second Dumas, and appointed later to the Senate. He is chiefly known for a speech of 1906, recommending tolerance to both parties, the revolutionaries and the reactionaries, which naturally excited the indignation of both.

[7] Name-day. That is, the day of the saint whose name she received at baptism, celebrated as we celebrate birthdays. February 5th is the festival of St. Agatha (Agáfya).

"Trudge, trudge? Angels bore him on their wings. Trudge indeed! You get three telegrams from an outlandish Jew woman," she growled, "and telegrams every day about your Golokhvótika; never a trudge then; but I get name-day greetings, and it 's 'trudge'!"

And one could not but acknowledge that she was right. This telegram, the only one in the whole year that was addressed to the kennels, by the pleasure it gave Agáfya Mikháilovna was certainly far more important than some news or other about a ball given in Moscow in honor of a Jewish banker's daughter, or about Olga Andréyevna Golokvástovy's arrival at Yásnaya.

When Alexéy Stepánovitch, the bailiff, was dying, he lay all alone in his room, and Agáfya Mikháilovna used to come and sit with him for hours, nursing him and entertaining him with conversation. He was ill for a long time, with cancer of the stomach, I believe. His wife, Dunyásha-mama-has-come-on-business, had died some years before.

On one of the long winter evenings when Alexéy Stepánytch lay in bed, and Agáfya Mikháilovna sat beside him making tea for him, they discoursed of death and agreed that whichever of them died first would tell the other, when the moment came, whether it was a pleasant thing to die.

When Alexéy Stepánytch lost all his strength and

it was evident that death was near, Agáfya Mikháilovna was mindful of their conversation, and asked him if he was happy.

"Very, very happy, Agáfya Mikháilovna," he answered, and those were almost his last words. This was in 1882.

She was fond of telling this story, and I had it both from her and from my father. My father was always extraordinarily curious and attentive about the sensations of the dying, and, whenever he could, picked up the smallest details about their experiences.

He associated the story in his mind with the memory of his elder brother Dmítry, of whom he was very fond, and with whom he entered into a compact that whichever of them died first would come back after death and tell the other of his life "beyond." But Dmítry Nikoláyevitch died fifty years before my father and never came back to tell the tale.

Agáfya Mikháilovna did not confine her affection to dogs. She had a mouse that used to come out when she had tea and pick up the bread crumbs on the table.

Once we picked a quantity of wild strawberries, clubbed threepence together for a pound of sugar, and made Agáfya Mikháilovna a jar of jam. She was very pleased and thanked us warmly.

"All of a sudden," she told us, "as I sat down to

my tea and put out my hand for the jam, I found the mouse in the jam-pot. I took her out, washed her well with warm water, struggle as she might, and then let her go on the table again."

"And the jam?"

"I threw the jam away. A mouse is a heathen [8] beast, I would n't eat anything a mouse had been at."

Agáfya Mikháilovna died at the beginning of the nineties. There were no more hounds or sporting dogs at Yásnaya then, but she gave shelter to a motley collection of mongrels, and tended and fed them till the end of her days.[9]

I recall with gratitude the memory of my old nurse, Márya Afanásyevna, a colorless but good old woman, who nursed the five eldest of us. She had the keys of the store-room and we delighted in running to her room to ask for "Almonds an' 'aisins."

Her son, Sergéi Petróvitch Arbúzof, was our footman for many years, and it was with him that my father afterwards used to go on his visits to the Opta Hermitage.[10] He was a carpenter by handicraft,

[8] "Heathen," *pogány,* from the Latin *paganus;* "of the devil," "unclean" in the Pentateuchal sense.

[9] Readers of "Anna Karénina" may remember that Tolstoy gave the name Agáfya Mikháilovna to Lévin's housekeeper, doubtless in memory of this old member of his own household.

[10] A famous and populous "Hermitage"—something after the manner of the hermitage in the Thebaid described by Anatole France — said to have been founded in the 14th century by Opta, a repentant brigand. Tolstoy paid frequent visits to the Hermitage when he was searching for a religion.

was liable to bouts of drink and wore bright red whiskers.

Her other son, Pável, was a bootmaker, lived in the village and was my father's first teacher when he took up bootmaking.

CHAPTER III

YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA. THE HOUSE. PORTRAITS OF ANCESTORS. MY FATHER'S STUDY.

I CAN remember the house at Yásnaya Polyána as it was during the first years after my father's marriage.

It was one of the two-storied stone wings of the old mansion-house of the Princes Volkónski,[1] which my father had sold for pulling down when he was still a bachelor.

From what my father has told me, I know that the house in which he was born and spent his youth was a three-storied building with thirty-six rooms. On the spot where it stood, between the two wings, the remains of the old stone foundation are still visible in the form of trenches filled with rubble, and the site is covered with big sixty-year-old trees which my father planted himself.

[1] The possession of a stone house in Russia, where wood is the usual material for building, gives an exceptional feeling of continuity and hereditary grandeur. "The existence of an old-established family residence, in which each successive owner has left some evidence of his own personality, a family monument, which every member regards with a feeling of affection and pride, is a rare exception in the rural districts."—F. H. E. Palmer, "Russian Life in Town and Country," 1901.

When any one asked my father where he was born, he used to point to a tall larch which grew on the site of the old foundations.

"Up there, where the top of that larch waves," he used to say; "that 's where my mother's room was, where I was born on a leather sofa."

It was strange to look up and see the slender tree-top and imagine that there was a room up there once, and that in it stood the walnut and leather sofa on which we older ones were born, and which now stands in my father's study; and that once, long ago, my father was a little child and had a mama just like we had. Only my father could not remember his mother. She died when he was only two years old and he only knew about her from what he had been told by his relatives.

She was small and ugly, but she had big clear eyes, full of light and kindness.

She had a wonderfully entertaining way of telling children's stories and my father used to say that it was from her that his eldest brother Nikolái inherited his cleverness.

My father seldom spoke of his mother, but when he did, it was delightful to hear him, because the mention of her awoke an unusual strain of gentleness and tenderness in him. There was such a ring of respectful affection, so much reverence for her memory

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE FAMILY

in his words, that we all looked on her as a sort of saint.

My father was nine when his father died, and he remembered him well. He loved him too, and always spoke of him reverently; but I always felt that his mother's memory, although he had never known her, was dearer to him, and his love for her far greater than for his father.

Even to this day I do not know the story of the sale of the old house exactly. My father never liked talking about it, and for that reason I could never make up my mind to ask him the details of the transaction. I only know that the house was sold by one of his relatives, who had charge of his affairs by power of attorney, when he was in the Caucasus, for 5000 paper roubles.[2]

It was said to have been sold to pay off my father's gambling debts. That is quite true.

My father told me himself that at one time he was a great card-player, that he lost large sums of money and that his financial affairs were considerably embarrassed.

The only thing about which I am in doubt is whether it was with my father's cognizance or by his directions that the house was sold; or whether the relative in question did not exceed his instructions

[2] About £600.

and decide on the sale of his own initiative—the most probable explanation.

My father cherished his parents' memory to such an extent, and had such a warm affection for everything relating to his own childhood that it is hard to believe that he would have raised his hand against the house in which he had been born and brought up and in which his mother had spent her whole life.

Knowing my father as I do I think he very likely wrote to his relative from the Caucasus: "Sell something," not in the least expecting that he would sell the house, and that he afterwards took the blame for it on himself. Is that not the reason why he was always so unwilling to talk about it?

In 1871, when I was five years old, the *zala*[3] and study were built onto the house.

I well remember the masons at their work, the knocking of the door-ways through the walls of the old house, and, especially clearly, the laying of the parquet floors. I enjoyed sitting on the floor where the carpenters were at work, watching them fitting in the oak slats, planing them, smearing them with their

[3] The *zala* is the chief room of a house, corresponding to the English drawing-room, but on a grand scale. The *gostínaya*—literally "guest-room"—usually translated as "drawing-room"—is a place for more intimate receptions. At Yásnaya Polyána meals were taken in the *zala* but this is not the general Russian custom, houses being provided also with a *stolóvaya* or dining-room.

smelly glue and knocking them tight into the mortises with their hammers.

When they had finished the parquet and waxed it over, it was so slippery, one was afraid to walk on it. And when it began to dry, it used to go off at times with loud reports like gun-shots; if I was alone in the room this was always too much for me, and I took to my heels.

The walls of the *zala* were hung with old ancestral portraits.[4] They were rather alarming, and I was afraid of them at first; but we got used to them after a time and I grew quite fond of one of them, of my great-grandfather Ilyá Andréyevitch Tolstoy, because I was told that I was like him. He had a fat, good-natured face. My father told me that he used to send his linen abroad to be washed, that he was immensely hospitable, jovial, and generous, and that he squandered the whole of his wife's enormous fortune.

Beside him hung the portrait of another great-grandfather, Prince Nikolái Sergéyevitch Volkónski, my grandmother's father, with thick, black eyebrows, a gray wig, and a red *kaftan*.[5] This Volkónski built all the buildings of Yásnaya Polyána. He was a model squire, intelligent and proud, and enjoyed the immense respect of all the neighborhood.

[4] Quite an unusual feature, even in the noblest Russian houses.

[5] *Kaftan*, a long coat of various cuts, including the military and naval frock-coat and the long gown worn by coachmen.

On another wall, between the doors, a big portrait of the blind old Prince Gortchakóf, father to my great-grandmother, Pelagéya Nikoláyevna Tolstoy, Ilyá Andréyevitch's wife, filled the whole bay. He was represented sitting at a semi-circular table with his eyes shut, and about him, on both sides, lay pocket-handkerchiefs which he kept by him to wipe his watery eyes with.

He was said to have been very rich and very avaricious. He was fond of counting his money and spent whole days going through his bank-notes. When he lost his sight, he used to make one of his familiars, the only person he trusted, bring him his cherished mahogany casket, which he unlocked with the key he kept on his person, and went on fingering the old crumpled notes over and over again. While he was so engaged, his confidant used secretly to steal the notes one by one from the heap and slip pieces of newspaper into their place. And the old man went on fumbling the pieces of newspaper with his thin tremulous fingers and believed that he was still counting money.

Further along hung the portrait of a nun with a rosary, mother of Gortchakóf, née Princess Mordkin, born in 1705; another, of Nikolái Volkónski's wife, née Princess Trubetskóy; and another, of Volkónski's father, who laid out the park and planted the lime-walks and *prishpékts* or avenues.

TOLSTOY'S ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

On the ground floor under the *zala*, next to the entrance hall, my father built his study. He had a semi-circular niche made in the wall and stood a marble bust of his favorite dead brother Nikolái in it. This bust was made abroad from a death-mask, and my father told us that it was very like, because it was done by a good sculptor according to his own directions. He had a kind and rather plaintive face. The hair was brushed smooth like a child's with the parting on one side. The bust had no beard or mustache, and it was white and very, very clean.

My father's study was divided in two by a partition of big bookshelves, containing a multitude of all sorts of books. In order to support the shelves, they were connected by big wooden beams, and between them was a thin birch-wood door, behind which stood my father's writing-table and his old-fashioned circular arm-chair.

These two connecting beams still exist. I am afraid to look at them even now, because I know that once my father wanted to hang himself on them.

The walls were adorned with antlers, which my father brought back from the Caucasus, and a stuffed stag's head. He used the antlers to hang his hat and his towel on.

There were portraits of Dickens and Schopenhauer and Fet [6] as a young man on the walls, too, and the

[6] Afanásyi Shénshin the poet, who adopted his mother's name

well-known group of writers of the "Sovreménnik" [7] circle in 1856, with Turgényef, Ostróvski, Gontcharóf, Grigoróvitch, Druzhínin, and my father, quite young still, without a beard, and in uniform.

My father used to come out of his bedroom of a morning—it was in a corner on the top floor—in his dressing-gown, with his beard uncombed and tumbled together, and go downstairs to dress. Soon after, he would issue from his study fresh and vigorous, in a gray smock-frock, and go up into the *zala* for breakfast. This was our only meal before dinner.

When there was nobody staying in the house he would not stop long in the drawing-room, but would take his tumbler of tea and carry it off to his study with him. But if there were friends and guests with us, he would get interested in the conversation, and not be able to tear himself away. With one hand thrust behind his leather belt, and with the other holding his silver tumbler-socket in front of him with a tumbler full of tea in it, he would stop at the door and remain rooted to the same spot for as much as half an hour, quite unaware that his tea was getting

Fet, owing to official difficulties about his birth certificate. An intimate friend of Tolstoy's. See Chapter XIII, below.

[7] The *Sovreménnik* or *Contemporary Review*, edited by the poet Nekrásof, was the rallying place of the "men of the forties," the new school of realists. Ostróvski is the dramatist; Druzhínin, the critic and editor; Gontcharóf the novelist, author of "Oblómof"; Grigoróvitch wrote tales about peasant life, some of which are given in Beatrix Tollemache's "Russian Sketches," 1913.

perfectly cold, and talk and talk, and somehow it was always just then that the discussion grew most animated and interesting. We all knew this spot by the door so well and knew for certain that when papa reached it, with his tumbler full of tea in his hand, he was sure to stop there with the intention of clinching the argument in a word or two, and the best part of the conversation would be only then beginning.

At last he would go off to his work, and we all dispersed, in winter to the different school-rooms, in summer to the croquet-lawn or somewhere about the garden. My mother would settle down in the *zala* to make clothes for the babies, or to copy out something she had not finished overnight; and till three or four in the afternoon silence reigned in the house.

Then my father would come out of his study and go off for his afternoon's exercise. Sometimes he took a dog and a gun with him, sometimes he rode and sometimes he merely went for a walk to the Crown Wood.

At five the big bell rang that hung on the broken bough of an old elm-tree in front of the house and we all ran to wash our hands and go in to dinner.

My father was very hungry as a rule and ate voraciously whatever turned up. My mother would try to stop him, and tell him not to waste all his appetite on *kasha*, because there were chops and vegetables to follow,—"You 'll have a bad liver again," she would

say, but he paid no attention to her and asked for more and more, until his hunger was completely satisfied. Then he would tell us all about his walk: where he had put up a covey of black game, what new paths he had discovered in the Crown Wood beyond Kudeyárof Well, or, if he rode, how the young horse he was breaking in had begun to understand the reins and the pressure of the leg. He would relate all this in the most vivid and entertaining way, so that the time passed very gaily.

"Mama, what 's pudding to-day?" Tánya, who was always bold and independent, would suddenly ask.

"Ilyá's favorite, pancakes and jam," answered my mother quite seriously, not noticing the shade of mischief, only too frequent in Tánya's tone.

I was sitting beside papa perhaps, and was afraid to take more than two pancakes. But it was quite safe to take it out in jam, because one could cover that up quickly with the other pancake and roll it all up out of sight. As soon as I had it all ready and was about to eat it, papa put out a surreptitious hand, snatched my plate away and said: "Come, you 've had plenty by now!" I did n't know whether to laugh or to cry. Fortunately papa looked me in the eyes and burst out laughing, or else I should have started bellowing.

After dinner he would go back to his room to read,

STARTING UPON A HORSEBACK RIDE FROM YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

and at eight we had tea, and the best hours of the day began—the evening hours, when everybody was gathered in the *zala*. The grown-ups talked or read aloud or played the piano, and we either listened to them or had some jolly game of our own, and in anxious fear awaited the moment when the English grandfather-clock on the landing would give a click and a buzz and slowly and clearly chime out ten.

Perhaps mama would not notice. She was in the small drawing-room making a fair copy.

"Come, children, bedtime! Say good-night."

"Oh, not yet, mama; just five minutes."

"Run along, it 's high time you were off; or there will be no getting you up in the morning to do your lessons."

We would say a lingering good-night, on the look-out for any chance of delay, and at last would go downstairs to the room with the arches,[8] very much aggrieved that we were children still and had to go to bed while the grown-ups could stay up as long as ever they liked.

What did they do when we had gone? I would wonder to myself.

You might be sure that that was the very time that

[8] The nursery was on the ground floor, under the arches which supported the "balcony-room." This nursery was afterwards turned into Tolstoy's study, and it is there that he is represented in Répin's famous portrait at his writing-table, with his scythe and saw and shovel about him.

things began to be jolliest. Ah, no wonder papa was so fond of saying "when I grow up"! Of course that was only his joke, because he was grown up and had everything a fellow could want. Oh, why was I not like him? He had three guns, several Caucasian daggers, some dogs, and a horse; and he did n't have to do any lessons; while I was still a child, and should remain one for a long time, and have to sleep in the nursery in the dark, with Márya Afanásyevna who had just blown out the tallow candle and told me to lie still and not fidget. "Shall I cry? No, what 's the use? I 'll stick my head under the bed-clothes and go to sleep."

And I hardly had time to shut my eyes and forget where I was before it was morning, bright and happy morning. A host of pleasures lay before me; in a moment I should get up and dress, run out in the garden, where I and Tánya had dug a cellar and storehouse in the ground; and then I should go and chase butterflies in the long grass by the "Thicket." [9] I must certainly catch a swallow-tail, Seryózha had one and I had none.

After that would follow lessons: but that was a detail; there was no need to think about that; and after that breakfast, a bath, dinner. . . .

How delightful life was! How brightly the sun

[9] The name given, for some reason, to a wood of ancient oak-trees, near the house at Yásnaya Polyána.

shone! How loud the nightingales sang under my windows! What a multitude of pleasures lay ahead! . . .

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTMAS TREES. IT 'S THE ARCHITECT'S FAULT. PROKHOR. ANKE PIE.

I RETAIN very vivid recollections of the Christmas trees of our childhood. How gay it was when all the guests gathered at Christmas, the Dyakófs, the Fets, and Uncle Kóstya, bringing us presents and heaps of sweetmeats; for some days we lived in anxious expectation and preparation, guessing what presents each would get, and passed our time building castles in the air.

Already two weeks before Christmas, mama would go into Tula, and buy a number of rough wooden dolls, and we set to work to make dresses for them. For this purpose she had been collecting remnants of various cloths, scraps of ribbon, and snippets of chintz and velvet, in the chest of drawers, for a whole year. She brought her big black bundle triumphantly into the *zala*, and we all sat at the round table, needle in hand, and spent hours busily sewing various petticoats, trowsers, and caps, and adorning them with gold lace and ribbon; and we were delighted when the naked strips of wood, with their

stupid painted faces, turned into elegant, handsome boys and girls. One could not help thinking that when they were dressed up, their faces became more intelligent, and each acquired a certain characteristic and interesting expression. These dolls were prepared for the village children; we none of us knew what presents we were going to get ourselves.

On Christmas Eve priests arrived and celebrated vespers. On Christmas Day we put on our best clothes when we got up, and in the *zala*, instead of the dining-table, stood a big bushy Christmas tree filling the whole room with a pleasant wild forest smell of fir needles. We hurried over dinner, anxious to get done as quickly as possible and run back to our part of the house. Then the doors of the *zala* were locked and the grown-ups decorated the Christmas tree and spread out our presents on little tables. Twenty times in the afternoon we would go running to the door to ask if it would soon be ready and peep through the key-hole, and the time passed very very slowly.

At last we were called. The door into the small drawing-room was unlocked and we all rushed through higgledy-piggledy into the *zala*.

We were dazzled by the brilliant blaze of the Christmas-tree candles and stood bewildered, not knowing what to do next. But this lasted only for a second; one soon recovered one's wits, and went

to look for one's own table on which one's presents were laid neatly out; a doll that shut its eyes, a big pencil, a calendar, a pen-knife, a kitchen range with pots and pans, and so on. One examined everything carefully and ran to see what Tánya and Seryózha had got. Their presents were better still. Tánya's doll was bigger than mine, and shut its eyes like mine when you laid it flat; but besides that there were two strings under its frock with blue beads at the end and when you pulled them it cried 'papa' and 'mama.' Seryózha had a gun which fired off a cork with a loud pop, and a tin watch with a chain to it.

Meanwhile mama was distributing dolls and gingerbread to the village children. They had been let in by another door, and stood close together on the right hand side of the Christmas tree, without coming over to our part of the room.

"Give me a doll, Auntie; Vanka has got one; I 've got nothing yet."

"Wait a bit, wait a bit, the little ones first, the big ones afterwards. You ought to be ashamed to play with dolls, a great big boy like you; wait a bit; if they go round, you shall have one too," said mama to pacify him, trying to be fair to every one.

Then one of the grown-ups sat down at the piano and struck up a lively *trepák*.[1]

[1] Trepák, a sort of brisk *tripudium*, with plenty of stamping in it.

Suddenly every one made way for an old man who appeared from no one knows where, with a long tow-beard, leading a bear on a rope.

"Come along, Misha,[2] give us a dance! Show us how the village children steal peas from the kitchen garden! Show us how the old woman turns over on the top of the stove! Show us how the village girls paint their faces with white and red," he said, putting on a deep bass voice, and the bear danced and crawled and lay down on one side and turned slowly over. We looked round at all the grown-ups to make sure whether they were all still there, and suddenly noticed that papa was missing. He had been there a moment ago and we had never noticed him go. Then we guessed that this was he, playing the bear in a fur coat turned inside out, and we were no longer afraid of the bear, but came boldly up and stroked his shaggy coat.

The first Christmas tree I remember was in the balcony room which my father used as a study in later years. After that it was always in the newly-built *zala*.

I was five years old then.

That year I was given a big porcelain tea cup and saucer. Mama knew that a tea cup and saucer had long been the dream of my life and she got it for me as a Christmas present. When I saw the

[2] Misha, diminutive of Michael, the Christian name of all bears.

cup on my table I did not stop to examine the rest of my presents, but caught it up in both hands and ran to show it to the others. As I ran across from the *zala* into the small drawing-room, I caught my foot on the step in the doorway and fell down, and my teacup was smashed to smithereens.

Of course I set up a loud howl and pretended that I was much worse hurt than I really was. Mama came running to comfort me and said that it was my own fault because I had been careless. This made me very angry and I bellowed that it was not my fault but the fault of the beastly architect, who had gone and put a step in the doorway, and if it had not been for the step I should never have tumbled down.

Papa overheard this and burst out laughing: "It 's the architect's fault, it 's the architect's fault!" and I felt angrier than ever and could not forgive him for laughing at me.

The phrase "It 's the architect's fault" was thenceforth adopted as a saying in our family, and papa was fond of repeating it whenever any one tried to throw the blame for anything on anybody else.

When I fell off my horse "because he stumbled" or "because the coachman had not strapped on the saddle-cloth tight enough," or when I did my lessons badly "because my tutor had n't explained them properly," or when I was doing my military service

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THE STATION AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

and had bouts of drinking and blamed army life for it—on these and all similar occasions my father used to say, "Of course, I know, it 's the architect's fault," and one always had to give in and confess oneself in the wrong.

Papa had a number of such sayings taken from actual events.

Another of them was: "For Prokhór's sake." I rather think he has himself told about the origin of this saying somewhere, probably in one of his letters.

When I was a child I was taught to play the piano.

I was very lazy and always played abominably; so long as I could strum out my hour's practice and get away, I was content.

All of a sudden one day papa heard the most brilliant runs and trills being executed in the *zala* and could not believe from the evidence of his ears that it was Ilyúsha playing.

When he came into the room and saw that it really was me playing, he also found Prokhór the carpenter busy at the window, putting in the winter frames.[3] Then he understood why I was trying so

[3] Russian windows are constructed with an embrasure deep enough to allow of another window, the "winter frame," being put in, sash and glass complete, about a foot inside the ordinary window. The cracks are papered over to keep out draughts, and some moisture-absorbing substance stands in pots between the two frames to prevent the glass from getting foggy. Communication with the outer air is effected by means of the *vasistas* or practicable pane, corresponding in each frame, which opens like a little door.

hard to do my best. I was playing "for Prokhór's sake."

Many a time afterwards did this "Prokhór" fill a big part in my life; many a time did my father reproach me with that phrase.

There was a good phrase of my father's which he was fond of repeating, at first with good-natured irony, but latterly with a certain bitterness. That was "Anke Pie."

My mother's parents had a friend called Dr. Anke, a Professor at the University, and he gave my grandmother, Lyubóv Alexándrovna Behrs, a recipe for a delicious name-day pie. When she married and came to Yásnaya Polyána, mama handed this recipe on to Nikolái the cook.

Ever since I can remember, at all the ceremonial functions of our life, on the great feast days and on name-days, Anke Pie was always dished up for a sweet. Without this pie, the dinner would only have been half a dinner, and the festival no festival at all. A poor sort of name-day it would have been without a ring-cake sprinkled with almond-chips at breakfast and without Anke Pie for the evening meal! It would have been no better than Christmas without a Christmas tree, Easter without Easter eggs to roll,[4] a nurse without a *kokósh-*

[4] Easter eggs are rolled by the children onto the floor down a little wooden gutter or trough set slanting against the wall. There is some recondite magical significance in the ceremony.

nik,[5] or quass without raisins. Without that there would have been no sanctity about it.

Every sort of family tradition—and my mother brought a large number into the house with her—was known to my father as "Anke Pie."

When Nikolái the cook died, Dr. Anke's recipe was passed on to his son, Semyón, and I shall not be astonished on the 20th of July, my name-day, if I go to Yásnaya Polyána, to find standing on the table, sprinkled with almond-chips, "short" and full of flavor, a ceremonial Anke Pie to welcome me.

[5] *Kokóshnik.* The crest or tiara of traditional Russian women's costume. Wet-nurses always wear the old-fashioned national costume.

CHAPTER V

AUNT TÁNYA. UNCLE KÓSTYA. THE DYAKÓFS. PRINCE URÚSOF.

IN the summer almost every year the Kuzmínskis used to stay with us at Yásnaya. Aunt Tánya Kuzmínski my mother's sister is still our favorite aunt. At one time Uncle Sásha Kuzmínski used to work at Tula and I can dimly remember how we used to go and visit him. After that he worked in various towns and his family used to come and visit us only in the summer.

I cannot remember my eldest cousin Dásha, the one who died in the Caucasus, but we were very great friends with the other two, Masha and Vera, and they were almost like members of our own family.

My aunt was very gay and full of life and to our childish imagination she seemed to be no less beautiful than mama.

When I was still a child and had not yet read "War and Peace," I was told that Natásha Rostóf was Aunt Tánya. When my father was asked whether that was true, and whether Dmítry Rostóf

SUMMER AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

was such and such a person and Lévin such and such another, he never gave a definite answer, and one could not but feel that he disliked such questions and was rather offended by them. He used to say that a writer forms his types from a whole series of people, and they never can or ought to be portraits of particular individuals. And this of course is true. Aunt Tánya recalled the type of Natásha Rostóf in many respects, but when I first read "War and Peace" I was struck by the idea that the other Tánya, my sixteen-year-old sister, was much more like Natásha than my aunt, whom I looked upon as a sort of mother, and I was astonished that my father should have written it when my sister Tánya was still quite a baby and that he should have divined her future character so accurately.

Aunt Tánya was great friends not only with papa and mama but with all of us children. We used to go fishing with her in the Grúmont and the Vorónka, rode together, went mushroom-hunting together and were always more than delighted when she invited us to dine with her in "the other house."

Of an evening when we were all gathered in the *zala* we used to get her to sing and honestly believed that no one in the whole world sang better than she did. Papa often used to play her accompaniments. I can still see him with his back bent over the keyboard, all tense with the exertion, and our beautiful

inspired Aunt Tánya standing by him with her eyebrows uplifted and a radiant expression in her eyes, and I can hear her pure, rather vibrating, and caressing voice. She sang Glinka's and Dargomýzhki's best ballads and I never heard any one sing "I remember the wonderful moment" or "When in an hour of gaiety" better than she did.

When my father married my mother, he was thirty-four,[1] and Aunt Tánya was still a girl, almost a child. Although as time passes the difference of years gets wiped out, one felt that papa always looked on Aunt Tánya semi-paternally as a sort of youngster, and she loved and respected him as an elder. The relations between them were therefore on a very sure and pleasant footing, and remained so till the end of his life. My father always responded to her outbursts of unexpected plain speaking, provoked by little household unpleasantnesses, with jovial good-humor and playfulness, and would at last bring her round, so that she would first give a rather sulky smile, and then melt altogether, and join in his laugh.

Unlike my mother, Aunt Tánya could understand a joke and answer back in the same vein. Later on, in the Chapter about the Letter-box,[2] I shall reproduce an extremely clever satire called "What Aunt Sonya likes and what Aunt Tánya likes." The

[1] His wife being only seventeen.
[2] Chapter XI.

author of it is unidentified. Was it not Aunt Tánya herself who wrote it?

Aunt Tánya was united to my mother not only by sisterly affection, but also by common interests. They were both devoted to their families and completely absorbed in the bringing up of their children.

When my mother and Aunt Tánya were both nursing children at the same time, if ever it happened that one of them had to go away for a few hours, the other would take both children to her breast.

. . . . . .

I can remember Uncle Kóstya Islávin from my earliest days. He was my mother's uncle and a friend of childhood of my father's.

His father A. M. Islényef's property "Krásnoye" was only sixteen miles from Yásnaya Polyána and the families of Tolstoy and Islényef were old and traditional friends. I can remember my great-grandfather Alexander Mikháilovitch as an old man of ninety when he visited us at Yásnaya and I can remember how he rode out coursing with the greyhounds with papa and Seryózha. He was a tremendous gambler and had lost the whole of his big property at cards.

I did not learn till later that Uncle Kóstya was not his legitimate son, and that all his life had been ruined by his having no fortune and no social position.

Uncle Kóstya always used to arrive quite unexpectedly and he delighted in taking us all by surprise. We would come back from our walk one day and hear some one playing the piano very brilliantly in the *zala*.

Papa at once guessed: "There 's Kóstenka" and ran upstairs to greet him. When we got into the room the music had stopped and Uncle Kóstya was standing on his head in a corner of the room.

Or we would come into breakfast one morning and find Uncle Kóstya sitting at the table reading the newspaper with an air of great solemnity. No one had noticed his arrival or could imagine how he had had time to have a bath and part his handsome blond beard so carefully.

Uncle Kóstya seemed to us to be the acme of elegance and fashion. No one could talk French so well as he could, no one could make such a beautiful bow or say the right word of greeting so aptly, or always be so uniformly agreeable. Even when he was finding fault with one of us about our manners the rebuke always came so mildly from his lips that it left nothing but a pleasant flavor.

He used to come to us for Christmas or for any family festival and often stayed quite a long time.

When our family moved into Moscow, Uncle Kóstya helped mama to furnish the flat, gave her advice when she first went into the world of fashion

UNCLE KÓSTYA ISLÁVIN

and was of great use to her in many ways. He was only too delighted to act as master of the ceremonies.

He was always very fond of us children. He used to tell me that in my physique and character he saw a strain of both my grandfathers, on the Tolstoy and Islényef sides.

Uncle Kóstya was a musician of remarkable talent. Nikolái Rubinstein,[3] with whom he was at one time intimate, prophesied a brilliant musical career for him. But unfortunately, Uncle Kóstya did not follow this line up and to the end of his days he remained an unsuccessful man, always solitary and in straitened circumstances.

Papa got him a place on the editorial staff of the *Moskóvskiya Vyédomosti* through Katkóf,[4] and he remained there for a considerable time. Then he got a job as superintendent of the Sheremétyef Hospital and ended his days there about fifteen years ago.

He left absolutely no property behind him. He even had hardly any shirts or linen. It appeared that everything he had he used to give away to the poor. And neither the acquaintances whom he met from day to day in fashionable drawing-rooms, always beautifully dressed, nor his intimate friends, ever suspected that this handsome and kindly old

[3] This is not the famous Rubinstein, but his brother, who was head of the "Musical Society" in Moscow.

[4] The well-known Panslavist editor, friend and adviser of Alexander III.

gentleman had absolutely nothing in the world but what he carried on him, and that he had given everything else away to people as unfortunate as himself.

. . . . . .

Of all the visitors of the earliest period of our childhood we were fonder of the Dyakófs than of any one else: namely my godfather Dmítry Alexéyevitch, his grown-up daughter Másha, and her companion Sophie. They almost always came together and for many years were always present at all our Christmas trees. I can still remember the beautiful presents they used to bring us.

Dmítry Alexéyevitch was, like Uncle Kóstya, one of my father's oldest friends. We were astonished when papa used to tell us that he could remember him as a very slim young man. This was very hard to believe, because when we knew him, Dmítry Alexéyevitch was the stoutest man we knew. He had such a round elastic stomach that with one jerk of his abdominal muscles he could send a man flying across the room like an india-rubber ball.

Whenever he arrived the whole house was animated by his good-humored fun and became the gayest place imaginable. We all sat listening eagerly for his jokes, at which everybody was delighted; we all used to roar with laughter when they came, papa louder than any one. Sometimes he sang Glinka duets with Aunt Tánya and this was really

first rate. "What a wonderful fellow Dmítry is! How capitally he sings!" said my father. We were in ecstasy and begged him to sing his songs over and over again.

Besides being great personal friends he and papa had another bond of union in the interest they both took in the management of their estates. The Dyakófs had a big and admirably organized property in the Novosílsk district, which Dmítry Alexéyevitch looked after like a model squire.

In those remote days about which I am talking, my father was extremely interested in the management of his property and devoted a great deal of energy to it. I can remember his planting the huge apple-orchard at Yásnaya, besides several hundred acres of birch and pine forest, and at the beginning of the seventies, for a number of years, he was interested in buying land cheap in the province of Samara, and breeding droves of steppe horses and flocks of sheep.

Dyakóf never shared my father's philosophical and religious convictions, and the longer they lived, the greater and greater was the division of opinion between them. I think the explanation of their continued friendship was their having been friends as children. My father set great store by his old friends and entertained the warmest and most cordial affection for them.

At this period of my life I can also remember

Prince Sergéi Semyónovitch Urúsof. He was a very odd and original man. He was almost a giant in stature. At the time of the Crimean War he was in command of a regiment and I am told he made himself remarkable by his extraordinary courage. He used to climb out of the trenches and walk up and down, dressed all in white, in a perfect rain of shells and bullets.

The story was—I remember his telling it to me himself—that when the troops were going South, and a General who was reviewing his regiment abused one of the soldiers like a pickpocket for having lost a button off his uniform, Urúsof called out to the soldier, "Fire at him!" The soldier fired at the General as he was told, but of course took good care not to hit him.

Urúsof was deprived of his command for this and was to have been dismissed from the army, but he was ultimately forgiven.

During the siege of Sebastopol he proposed to the Allies to avoid bloodshed by deciding the dispute with a game of chess. He was a very good chess player and could easily give my father a knight and beat him.

We children were rather afraid of him because he had the St. George's Cross [5] at his buttonhole, spoke

[5] *St. George's Cross,* the Russian reward "for valour." (The allusion being to the *English* Victoria cross.)

in a deep bass voice, and was of such gigantic size. In spite of his inches he always wore enormous heels to make himself bigger and I remember his once scolding me for not wearing them too. "How can you make such a guy of yourself?" he said, pointing at my shoes. "A man's beauty lies in his stature, and every one ought to wear big heels."

Somehow or other, by means of the higher mathematics, he used to calculate the length of every one's life, and he averred that he knew when my father and mother would die, but he kept the secret to himself and told no one.

He was strictly Orthodox by conviction. I do not know whether he had any influence on my father at the time when he set out on the search for a religion and began first by looking for it in the Orthodox church, but I think it quite probable that Urúsof may have had something to do with it.

CHAPTER VI

JOURNEY TO SAMARA

I STILL have pretty clear, though rather fragmentary and inconsequent recollections of our three summer excursions to the Steppes of Samara.

My father had already been there before his marriage in 1862 and went there again afterwards by the advice of Dr. Zakháryin [1] who attended him. He took the koumiss-cure [2] in 1871 and 1872, and at last in 1873 the whole family went there.

At that time my father had bought several hundred acres of cheap Bashkir lands in the district of Buzulúk and we went to stay on our new property at a *khútor* or farm.

I particularly remember our first expedition. We went by way of Moscow and Nizhny Nóvgorod and thence down the Volga to Samara on a splendid steamer belonging to the "Caucasus & Mercury Company."

[1] The same Dr. Zakháryin who attended Alexander III and was greatly blamed for telling him of his approaching death.

[2] *Koumiss* is fermented mare's milk, drunk by the Tartars as it was by the Scythians. Europeans go to the steppes to drink it as a cure for consumption and other wasting diseases.

The captain of the steamer, who was very charming and delightful, turned out to be a Sebastopol man, a comrade of my father's in the Crimean War.

We touched at Kazan in the daytime.

While the steamer was standing at the wharf we three, papa, Seryózha, and I, went for a walk in the outskirts of the town, near the wharf.

My father wanted to have a look, however distant, at the town where he had once been a University student.[2a] We did not notice how the time passed in conversation, and we walked a considerable distance.

When we got back we found that the steamer had gone quite a long time ago; the people there showed us a little receding speck in the distance on the river. My father ejaculated and groaned a great deal, and asked if there were not any other steamers going in the same direction; but it appeared that all the steamers of other companies had already gone and we must stay in Kazan and wait till the next day. Then papa found that he had not any money on him. He began to groan again and of course I bellowed like a calf. For my mother and Aunt Tánya and all the party had gone off on the steamer and we were left alone.

[2a] Tolstoy entered at Kazan University in 1843, when he was fifteen, and spent three years there. He took his degree in law at St. Petersburg University in 1848, three years before he joined the army.

A crowd of sympathetic people gathered round and tried to comfort me.

Suddenly some one observed that the little spot, our steamer, on which we had our eyes fixed all the time, was beginning to get bigger and bigger instead of smaller and smaller, and it soon became evident that it had turned round and was coming towards us.

A few minutes later it came alongside and took us on board and we continued our journey.

Papa was quite upset by the obligingness of the Captain in coming back to fetch us at my mother's request; he wanted to pay for the extra wood that had been burned in the boilers and did not know how to thank him enough. Now that the steamer had come back for him, he groaned still louder than when it was going away, and was quite out of countenance.

From Samara our party traveled eighty miles by road in a huge *dormeuse* with six horses and a postilion, and in several two-horse wicker-work chaises. My mother who was then nursing my little brother Peter—he died that autumn—rode in the *dormeuse* with the younger ones, Lyólya and Masha, while we others, I and Seryózha and Tánya, changed about, sometimes in papa's chaise, sometimes on the box of the *dormeuse*, and sometimes in the two-seated dicky attached to the back of it.

In Samara we lived on the farm, in a tumble-down wooden house, and beside us, in the steppe, were

STABLES AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

erected two felt *kibitkas*,[3] in which our Bashkir, Muhammed Shah Románytch, lived with his wives. Morning and evening they used to tie the mares up outside the *kibitkas*, where they were milked by veiled women, who then hid themselves within from the sight of men, behind a gaudy chintz curtain, and made the *koumiss*.

The *koumiss* was bitter and very nasty; but my father and Styópa [4] were very fond of it and drank it in large quantities.

They used to go into the *kibitka* and squat cross-legged on cushions ranged in a semi-circle on a Persian carpet. Muhammed Shah Románytch would greet them with a smile of his toothless old mouth, and from behind the curtain an invisible woman's hand would push out a leather *tursúk* [5] full of koumiss.

The Bashkir beat it up with a peculiar kind of stirrer, took a ladle of Carelian birch-wood, and began solemnly to pour out the foaming white liquor into the cups. The cups were also of Carelian birch and all of different shapes and sizes. Some were broad and flat, others were narrow and deep. Papa would take the biggest cup between his hands

[3] *Kibitkas*, Tartar frame-tents, a name also applied to their traveling-wagons, similarly tilted.

[4] Stephen Behrs, the Countess's brother.

[5] *Tursúk*, a triangular horse-leather drinking pouch which the Bashkirs and Kirgizes carry at the saddle.

and drink it right off at one draught. Románytch would fill it up again and again, and my father often drank eight cups or more at a sitting.

"Why don't you drink too, Ilyúsha? Just see how delicious it is," he said to me, holding out a brimming cup. "Just drink it right off and you 'll never stop asking for it."

With a great effort over myself I drank a few sips, jumped up and rushed out of the *kibitka* to spit it out, so disgusting did it taste and smell to me. But papa and Styópa and even Seryózha drank it three times a day.

At that time my father was very much interested in farming and especially in horse-breeding. Our *kosyáks* or droves of mares ranged in the steppe, and a stallion went with every drove. The horses were very miscellaneous; there were English hunters, stallions of the old-fashioned Rostoptchín breeds, trotters, Bashkirs, and *argamáks*.[6]

Our stud afterwards increased to four hundred, but then came several bad years, many of the horses perished, and in the eighties the whole enterprise somehow melted away.

But we still kept some of the horses which had been brought from Samara at Yásnaya Polyána. They were wonderfully good saddle-horses; we rode them

[6] Long-limbed horses, originally of Circassian breed.

for many a year, and their descendants are still living to this day.

My father organized some horse-races that summer.

He had a ring of two miles measured out and marked with a plough-furrow and word was sent to all the Bashkirs and Kirgizes of the neighborhood that there were to be races and prizes.

The prizes were a gun, a silk *khalat* [7] and a silver watch.

In order to be exact, I must mention that we also had horse-races on our second visit to Samara in 1875, and it is quite possible that I may have mixed them up and shall be telling here what really happened the second time. But the confusion is unimportant.

A day or two before the appointed time the Bashkirs began to come in with their *kibitkas*, their wives, and their horses. Side by side with Muhammed Shah Románytch's *kibitka* there rose a whole village of felt-covered *kibitkas* in the steppe, and beside each of them the Tartars made pickets for their horses and constructed earthen stoves to prepare their food in.

The steppe was all alive.

Women with veiled heads glided mysteriously to

[7] *Khalat,* a Tartar word, from the Arabic, for the long gown worn by the Tartars; also used in Russian for an ordinary dressing-gown.

and fro among the kibitkas; portly and dignified Bashkirs were to be seen walking up and down; and the horses training for the race whirled by in the open accompanied by the loud whooping of their riders.

Two days were spent in feasting and preparing for the race. The Tartars drank an enormous quantity of *koumiss* and ate fifteen sheep and a horse, a lame English colt which had been fattened on purpose.

In the evenings, when it grew cool after the sultriness of day, all the men in their curious many-colored *khalats* and embroidered skull-caps gathered together for bouts of wrestling and cock-fighting.

My father was stronger than any of them and pulled all the Bashkirs over at cock-fighting on a stick.[8]

A certain Russian peasant-mayor who weighed about 22 stone, was the only man he could not pull over. He would pull with all his might and lift him half-way off the ground; it seemed as if in another moment he must have got the Mayor up on his legs, and we all waited with our hearts in our mouths; when suddenly the Mayor would fling himself flop on the ground with all his weight and my father was

[8] In this particular form of cock-fighting, the two combatants sit facing each other on the ground with their toes together, both holding on to a stick, and each endeavors to pull the other towards him and force him to rise on his feet.

PEASANT WOMEN OF THE YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA DISTRICT

pulled up on to his feet and stood before him smiling and shrugging his shoulders.

One of the Bashkirs was very good at "playing on his throat," and my father was always making him perform. This is a very curious art. The performer lies down on his back and a little musical instrument seems to play in the depths of his throat, giving forth a clear, delicate note with a sort of metallic ring in it; one is puzzled to imagine how these melodious sounds can be produced, so sweet and so unexpected are they.[9]

There are very few who can "play on their throat," and even at that time it was said that the art was dying out among the Bashkirs.

On the day of the races every one rode or drove to the course, the women in covered carriages and the men on horseback.

A great many horses ran. The distance was 16½ miles which they did in 39 minutes, and one of our horses got second prize.

After the race we went to the Karalýk with my father on a visit to the Bashkirs and they gave us a dinner of mutton soup. Our host took pieces of mutton in his hands and distributed them to all the guests. When one of the Bashkirs who was among the visitors refused what was offered him, the host wiped his face all over with the greasy lump of mut-

[9] There is no apparatus used in this performance.

ton as if with a sponge, until the visitor gave in and ate it.

After dinner we walked out into the steppe to look at the Bashkirs' droves. My father expressed great admiration for a certain light bay horse, and when we were preparing to go home we found the animal tied up to the shaft of our cart. My father was much perturbed, but to refuse the present would have been to offend our host, and we were obliged to accept it. My father had to make the Bashkir a considerable present in gold-pieces afterwards.

The Bashkir's name was Mikháil Ivánovitch. He came to see us several times and my father was fond of playing draughts with him. While he was playing Mikháil Ivánovitch used to keep murmuring "Have to think; very big think." But often, in spite of his "think," he got caught and my father would shut in his men and prevent him from moving, and we were all delighted and laughed like anything.

We lived with our German tutor Fyódor Fyódorovitch in an empty barn in which rats squeaked and ran about at night.

There were flocks of beautiful *dudáks* or great bustards [10] wandering in the steppe, often quite close to the house; and high up among the clouds sped by huge dark tawny eagles.[11]

[10] *Otis tarda.* The great bustard does not fly, or very little.
[11] Aquila fulva.

My father, Fyódor Fyódorovitch, and Styópa often tried to shoot the bustards, but they were very cautious birds and it was almost impossible to get within range.

However, Fyódor Fyódorovitch once succeeded in creeping up unobserved towards one of them from behind a flock of sheep, and wounded it. When it was brought home alive, with some one holding its wings on either side, papa and all of us rushed out to meet it, and this was such a momentous occasion that I still remember it quite clearly.

Only a year ago Fyódor Fyódorovitch came to see me, old and broken down with paralysis, and we talked the event over again, and he remembered it just as well as I did.

My father went away from the farm from time to time to buy horses at the markets in Buzulúk and Orenburg.

I remember the first time when a drove of perfectly wild steppe horses was brought in and driven into the enclosure.

When they went in to catch them with stick-lassos [12] several of the horses dashed at the brick and earth wall, jumped over it, and galloped away into the steppe. Our Bashkir Lutái galloped after them, mounted on our best hunter, and came back driving them before him late at night.

[12] Sticks with running nooses on the end.

This Bashkir could break in even the most restive savage. When the horse had been lassoed and bridled, two men would hold it by the bit and by the ears; the Bashkir would jump on its back, call out "Let go!" give it the reins and disappear in the steppe. A few hours afterwards he would return at a foot-pace with the horse all in a lather and as obedient as if it had been ridden for years.

Another time my father brought from Orenburg a splendid white Bokhára argamák and a pair of young donkeys which we took back afterwards to Yásnaya and on which we rode for many years. My father called them Bismarck and MacMahon.

On our second expedition to Samara, in 1875, my father rode into Buzulúk to see some old Russian hermit who had lived there for twenty-five years in a cave. He had heard of him by report from the peasants of the neighborhood, who reverenced him as a saint. I begged my father to let me go with him, but he would not take me because my eyes were very bad at that time. I imagine that this hermit had nothing particularly interesting about him, as I do not remember my father's having anything to tell us about him.

The first year that we were on the farm there was a bad failure of the crops in the province of Samara, and I remember how my father rode about from village to village, went from house to house himself and made a register showing the condition of the peasants.

A VIEW IN THE GROUNDS OF YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

His first question at each house was whether the owners were Russians or Molokans,[13] and he was particularly interested in talking about religious questions with the dissenters.

The peasant he was fondest of conversing with was a dignified and intelligent old man, Vasíly Nikítitch, who lived in Gavrílovka, the nearest village to us. Whenever he went to Gavrílovka my father stopped at his house and had a long talk with him. I cannot remember what they talked about, as I was quite small at that time and took no interest in famines or religious conversations. I can only remember that Vasíly Nikítitch kept repeating the word *dvistítelno*,[14] "as a matter of fact," and that he gave us the most wonderfully clear white honey with our tea.

[13] Meaning by "Russian" Orthodox; the Molokans being no less Russian than the rest. The Molokans are a rationalist sect allied to the Doukhobors, from whom they differ in declaring that all religion must be based on the text of the Old and New Testaments, while the Doukhobors maintain that "inward illumination" is the only guide. The name "Molokans" is a nickname given them by the Orthodox, because they drink milk (*molokó*) during Lent; their own name for themselves is "spiritual Christians." Stephen Grellet, the Quaker, greatly preferred them to the Doukhobors and wrote a letter to Alexander I asking for special privileges for them.

[14] *Dvistítelno* for *deistvítelno,* like the comic First Peasant in Tolstoy's comedy, "The Fruits of Enlightenment."

CHAPTER VII

GAMES; MY FATHER'S JOKES; BOOKS; LESSONS

EVER since I can remember, we children were divided into two groups, the "big ones" and the "little ones." [1]

The big ones were Seryózha, Tánya, and myself. The little ones were my brother Lyólya (Lyof) and my sister "little" Masha who was so called to distinguish her from her cousin "big" Masha Kuzmínski. We elder ones always kept ourselves apart and never admitted the little ones into our company, because they understand nothing and only interrupted our games. It was on account of the little ones that we had to get home earlier than we needed; the little ones might catch cold; it was on account of the little ones that we were not allowed to make a noise, because they slept in the daytime; and if one of the little ones cried about anything we had done and went and complained to mama, it was always the big ones' fault and it was we who got scolded and punished.

The one I was most united with both by age and

[1] The names "big ones" and "little ones" were expressed in English in the Tolstoy household, just like the epithets of "big" and "little" Masha.

by character was my sister Tánya. She was a year and a half older than I was; black-eyed, lively and inventive. It was always jolly with her and we understood one another with half a word. I and she knew things which nobody but ourselves could understand.

We were very fond of running round the dining-table in the *zala*. I would hit her on the shoulder and run away at full speed.

"I hit you last! I hit you last!"

She would come after me, catch me a slap and run away again.

"I hit you last! I hit you last!"

Once I caught her up and was just raising my hand to hit her, when she suddenly stopped and faced round on me, hopping up and down, waving her hands in front of her and saying: "This is an owl, this is an owl!"

Of course I understood at once that if "this" was "an owl" it was out of the question to touch her; and from that time it became the regular rule that when any one said "this is an owl," they could not be touched.

Seryózha would never have understood this. He would have begun asking a lot of questions and arguing about why one should not touch an owl, and would have come to the conclusion that there was no point in it; but I saw at once that this was a very sensible arrangement, and Tánya knew that I should

understand her and that was her reason for saying it.

My father was the only person who properly understood me and Tánya, and that not always.

He had some excellent inventions of his own and taught us quite a lot.

For instance, there was his "Numidian Cavalry."

We would all be sitting, perhaps in the *zala*, rather flat and quiet after the departure of some dull visitors. Up would jump my father from his chair, lifting one hand in the air, and run at full speed round the table at a hopping gallop. We all flew after him, hopping and waving our hands like he did. We would run round the room several times and sit down again panting in our chairs in quite a different frame of mind, gay and lively. The Numidian Cavalry had an excellent effect many and many a time. After that exercise all sorts of quarrels and wrongs were forgotten and tears dried with marvelous rapidity.

Excellent also were some humorous verses which my father recited to us when we were children. I do not know where he got them from, I only remember that they gave us extraordinary delight. They ran like this:

Die angenehme Winterzeit
Is ferry nice indeet!
Beiweilen wird's ein wenig kalt;

Doch Himmel, stamp your feet!
Auch wenn Man doch nach Hause kommt
Da steht der Punch bereit:
Ist es nicht ferry nice indeet
An der kalten Winterzeit?

Another poem which also had to be said in broken German was to this effect:

Doctor, Doctor Hupfenzeller,
Haf some pity on a feller:
First I must n't eat all day,
Denn he take my pipe away:
Whoa! whoa! whoaaa!

These lines were trotted out at various junctures of life and had an excellent effect when for no particular reason one of us had "left his eyes out in the rain."

The games of early childhood are pretty much the same all over the world, playing at horses, at soldiers, dolls, and hide and seek. As we got bigger we began to invent our own games and they often turned out very interesting.

Once we had all been deep in a translation of some stupid novel in which the chief part was played by a Mr. Ulverston. I have completely forgotten the plot of the novel; I only remember that Mr. Ulverston was the hero and fell in love with somebody and said: "I am lonely and bored." We cut out all the characters of this novel in paper and lay on the floor in the *zala* and made our figures walk and talk and act

out the whole of the story. The best of all at reciting the parts was our chief inventive genius Tánya.

Papa found us one day playing this game and took a pair of scissors and cut us out a man who was entirely pink. He cut him out of a plate in a French fashion paper, and the whole figure was taken from the bare decolleté of a highly-colored lady, so that he was completely flesh-colored all over. There was no such character in the novel. However, papa told us that this was Adolphe, and we at once invented a part for him, and ever afterwards he was our favorite hero. We could no longer imagine the novel having any point without Adolphe.

At this period of our childhood we began to be wrapped up in Jules Verne. Papa brought the books from Moscow, and every evening he read aloud to us from "The Children of Captain Grant," "Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea," "From the Earth to the Moon and Round It," "Three Russians and Three Englishmen," and last of all "Around the World in Eighty Days."

There were no illustrations to this last story, so papa illustrated it himself. Every day he prepared appropriate drawings in pen and ink for the evening, and they were so interesting that they gave us far more pleasure than the pictures in all the rest of the books.

I can clearly remember one of his drawings repre-

senting some fantastic and terrible Buddhist goddess or other with several heads adorned with snakes. My father could not draw a bit, nevertheless the results were delightful and we were all tremendously pleased. We awaited the evening impatiently, and all crawled across the top of the round table in a bunch, when he got to the place that he had illustrated and broke off reading to pull out his picture from under the book.

After Jules Verne—this was in Monsieur Nief's days—we had Dumas' "Three Musketeers" read to us, and papa himself struck out the passages which were not fit for children to hear. We were greatly interested in these censured pages in which the love affairs of the principal characters were narrated; and we were very anxious to read them in secret but never summoned up courage.

. . . . . .

I have already mentioned our beloved English nurse Hannah above. After her came the red-cheeked youthful Dora; then Emily Carrie; and the last English woman went when my youngest brothers, Andréi and Mikháil, grew out of childhood.

When we boys began to get big, we had tutors; the first of these was a German, Fyódor Fyódorovitch Kaufmann, who stayed for two or three years. I cannot say that we were particularly fond of him. He was rather rough, and even we children were

struck by his essentially German stupidity. His redeeming feature was that he was a devoted sportsman. Every morning he used to jerk the blankets off us and shout "Auf, Kinder! auf!" and during the daytime plagued us with German calligraphy. He had thick dark hair which he wore very smooth. Once I woke up at night and, still half-asleep, saw Fyódor Fyódorovitch sitting in front of the glass with a head as naked as a pumpkin, shaving himself. I was very frightened, and he ordered me angrily to turn over on the other side and go to sleep.

In the morning I did not know whether it was a dream I had seen, or whether it was real. It appeared that Fyódor Fyódorovitch wore a wig, and took pains to conceal it.

After Fyódor Fyódorovitch we had a Switzer, Monsieur Rey, as tutor for several years, and it was after him that we had Monsieur Nief, a French Communard, the man who brought a squirrel and a viper to the kitchen to fry. In Russian, Monsieur Rey and Monsieur Nief were called simply Mr. Gray (Pose-rey-f) and Mr. Blue (Posi-nief). These nicknames were very suitable, for the former was always dressed in gray and the latter in blue.

When the Amnesty was proclaimed in France, Monsieur Nief departed for Algeria; and it was only then we learnt that his real name was le Comte de Montels.

TOLSTOY ENJOYING A GAME OF CHESS

In the winter, when we skated on the big pond, he used to walk up and down on the bank in a short fur jacket, frozen to death, rubbing his hands together and saying, "Oh que les Russes sont frileux!" Why, because he felt the cold so much himself, he should accuse the Russians of it, we could never make out.

Speaking of Monsieur Nief, I should like to tell of one amusing incident, very characteristic of him. Once when we were sitting at tea in the evening, papa was looking through the *Moskóvskiya Vyédomosti* which had just arrived by post. It contained news of an attempt on the life of the Emperor Alexander II. As Monsieur Nief was sitting with us, papa translated the article from Russian into French as he read.

When he came to the place where the paper said, "But the Lord did not suffer his Anointed One to perish," papa, having read "Mais le bon Dieu n'a pas perdu son, son . . ." hesitated, evidently searching for the French word for "Anointed One."

"Son sang froid?" suggested Monsieur Nief, perfectly seriously. We all roared with laughter, and there the newspaper reading ended.

Besides the people mentioned, my sisters almost always had French governesses; we boys also had Russian tutors, and in addition, once a week our

music master, A. G. Mitchúrin, came over from Tula; so that all our time was spent at lessons, which were portioned out as in schools, and we passed from one teacher to another.

My mother and father also gave us lessons.

I have already described how papa taught me arithmetic when I was quite a child. Later, when I was about thirteen I think, he began to give me Greek lessons. I remember his beginning to learn Greek himself, I remember the zeal and perseverance with which he set to work; he got on so well that after six weeks he could read Herodotus and Xenophon at sight. It was also on Xenophon that he started us. He explained the alphabet to me, and then set me on to the Anabasis at once. At first it was very hard. I sat with glassy eyes, and often was on the point of howling; but in the end I saw that I had got to go through with it, and I did.

I was taught Latin in the same way.

When I went up for the entrance examination at Polivánof's Classical Gymnase in 1881, I surprised all the masters because, though completely ignorant of grammar, I could read the classics at sight far better than was required of me. In this I see a proof that my father's original system of teaching was the right one.

It was just in the same way that later on he learnt Hebrew, and he got to know it so well that he could

make out all the passages he wanted in the Old Testament, and often gave original interpretations of his own of several passages to his teacher, Rabbi Minor.

CHAPTER VIII

RIDING. "THE GREEN STICK." SKATING.

THE chief passion of my childhood was riding. I well remember the time my father wrote about in the letter given at the beginning of these Reminiscences, when he used to put me in the saddle in front of him and we rode out to bathe in the Vorónka.

I remember how I was shaken up when he trotted, and how afraid I was of losing my balance all the time. I remember how my hat used to fall off in the forest, and Seryózha or Styópa used to get off his horse and pick it up; and above all I remember the smell of the horse when I approached it and the footman, Sergéi Petróvitch, took me by the leg and jumped me up into the saddle. I grasped the friendly withers and held on with all my might with both hands.

When we arrived at the bathing-place, we used to tie the horses up to birch-trees and run down the platform. Papa and Styópa used to dive head-first straight into the open river; while we boys used to splash about in the waters of the bathing-place look-

ing at the little fish and lively long-legged spiders that ran along the top of the water and somehow never got drowned. Papa taught us to swim, and when we could swim out into the river we bragged a good deal about it, and felt that it showed great courage.

Our first riding-horses were Spoonbill (Kólpik) and Kashírski.[1] Fyódor Fyódorovitch used to call them *der Kolpinka* and *der Kassachirski*. I went for my first ride alone on the gray Spoonbill, and from that time forth I was able to ride without help.

Papa sometimes took us out riding with him; and then we used to go quite a long way.

I shall never forget how he tormented me one day. Hearing that he was going for a ride, I begged him to take me with him, until at last he consented. He was riding a sturdy English mare, and they mounted me on a Samara bay, with nothing but a saddle-cloth; no saddle or stirrups. It was the same horse which took the second prize at the races. He was an easy horse to ride, but he had a very sharp and bony backbone.

So off we started.

As soon as we got into the flat, papa set off at a brisk trot, and I went jogging after him. We rode on and on until we were more than three miles from home. I was so tired I could hardly stand it, and

[1] That is, from the district of Kashira in Tula Province.

still he went on. Every now and then he would look back and ask, "You 're not tired?" and of course I said no: and on we went again.

We rode all round the Crown Wood, and across the Grumont by various foot-paths and hollows; and when I got home at last I could hardly crawl off my horse, and for three days afterwards I was a regular cripple and every one called me John Gilpin. John Gilpin is the hero of a very amusing English poem. His horse ran away with him and he could not stop it, and galloped a tremendous distance and had various adventures. When they took him off his horse he was quite bandy-legged. We were very fond of the pictures in the book, of which I remember one representing John Gilpin galloping with his wig flying off; and another where he is getting off his horse with his bald head bare and his knees turned out.[2]

. . . . . .

I have several interesting recollections connected with these rides to the bathing-place.

First of all the story about the "Green Stick." On the right hand side of "Bathing-place Road," at the top of a gully, near a small glade, there is a place remarkable for its strange artificial top-soil. The earth is covered with a layer of fine black slag, evidently the remains of some ancient iron-works.

In this place, a narrow footpath runs among the

[2] Evidently Randolph Caldecott's edition.

oak trees parallel with the road, with twisted bare roots of trees crossing it. As my horse went over these roots, he used to prick up his ears, and lift up his legs in a peculiar way, and I would tuck in my knees so as not to knock them against the trees.

It was here, according to my father, that his brother Nikólenka had buried a mysterious green stick, with which he connected a childish legend of his own. "If any one of the Ant-brothers [3] finds this stick," he used to say, "he will enjoy great happiness, and make all mankind happy by the power of love." As we rode past the place, my father was fond of telling us this story, and I remember once asking him what the stick was like, and thinking I would go out with a spade and look for it. At that time of course my father had no idea that one day he would be buried on that very spot.

Here is another reminiscence. One day as we were going to bathe, papa turned round and said to me: "Do you know, Ilyúsha, I am very pleased with myself to-day. I have been bothered with her for three whole days, and could not manage to make her go into the house; try as I would, it was impossible. It never would come right.

[3] This supposititipus Totemistic order has been shown by Tolstoy himself to have arisen from a childish and natural confusion between "Moravian" Brothers and *muravéiny,* adjective, "of ants." Tolstoy's own eirenistic philosophy was largely derived from the teaching of Peter of Chelczic, the founder of the Moravian Brothers.

"But to-day I remembered that there is a mirror in every hall, and that every lady wears a bonnet.

"As soon as I remembered that, she went where I wanted her to, and did everything she had to.

"You would think a bonnet is a small affair but everything depended on that bonnet."

As I recall this conversation I feel sure that my father was talking about that scene in "Anna Karénina," where Anna goes secretly to see her son Seryózha, after her separation from Karénin.

Although there is nothing about a bonnet or a mirror in this scene, in the final form of the novel—nothing is mentioned but a thick black veil—still I imagine that in its original form, when he was working on the passage, my father may have brought Anna up to the mirror, and made her straighten her bonnet, or take it off.

I can remember the interest with which my father told me this, and it seems strange to me now that he should have talked about such subtle artistic experiences to a boy of seven who was hardly capable of understanding him at the time. However that was often the case with him.

I once heard him give a very interesting definition of the qualities a writer needs for his work:

"You cannot imagine how important one's mood is," he said. "Sometimes you get up in the morning, fresh and vigorous, with your head clear, and you

AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA, FEBRUARY, 1908

THE POND AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

begin to write. Everything is sensible and consistent. You read it over next day and have to throw the whole thing away, because, good as it is, it misses the main thing. There is no imagination in it, no subtlety, none of the necessary 'something,' none of that 'only just' without which all your cleverness is worth nothing. Another day you get up after a bad night, with your nerves all on edge, and you think, well, to-day I shall write well at any rate! And as a matter of fact, what you write is beautiful, picturesque, with any amount of imagination. You look it through again; it is no good, because it is written stupidly. There is plenty of color but not enough intelligence.

"One's writing is good only when the intelligence and the imagination are in equilibrium. As soon as one of them overbalances the other, it 's all up; you may as well throw it away and begin afresh."

And as a matter of fact there was no end to the rewriting in my father's works. His industry in this particular was truly marvelous.

Besides riding and sport, we were extremely fond of skating and croquet.

As soon as the pond froze over, we used to put on our skates and spend all the time we had out of lessons on the ice.

At the beginning of the winter when the ice was not yet firm we were not allowed to skate on the "Big

Pond," and had to go to the "Lower Pond" which was smaller, and, what was more important, shallower.

Papa told us the following story about the Lower Pond. When he was a child a boy called Volódenka Ogaryóf came on a visit to Yásnaya. He was a conceited creature full of self-importance and contempt for everything that was not himself. When the Tolstoy children took him round to show him the park he walked up to the Lower Pond and said contemptuously: "What is this?"

"A pond."

"A pond? This? It 's a puddle. I 'll jump over it as soon as look at it!"

The children egged him on, "Go on, jump away!"

Volódenka took a run down the knoll and jumped. Of course he jumped right into the middle of it and would probably have been drowned if some women who were there haymaking had not pulled him out with their rakes. After this Volódenka drew in his horns a little.

I once played a very dirty trick on this pond for which I paid dearly afterwards. We had gone down to skate, and some five or six village boys of my own age came and joined us. The ice was still thin and kept giving long metallic reports when you set foot on it. I thought I should like to see how strong it was, so I collected all the boys into one spot, and

told them at the word One, two, three! to jump with all their might. I myself drew off to one side.

The boys gave a jump, the ice broke under them and they all went to the bottom in a heap. Fortunately it was in a shallow place, near the tail of the pond, and no great harm came of it. The children were brought into the house and dried and given hot tea to drink, and I was severely punished.

There was a wooden tobogganing hill on the big pond, and all the winter there used to be paths swept on it. My father and mother skated with us and added great animation to our games.

Our liveliest skater was my brother Seryózha. The ice on the pond was swept, as it were, in main streets, and side streets; and Seryózha used to run away from us through this maze, while I and Tánya tried to catch him. Once at a crossing Seryózha somehow failed to dodge out of the way and we all three collided at the top of our speed and fell, Seryózha underneath and we two on the top. When we got up we saw Seryózha, all blue in the face, lying on the ice, and wriggling his legs. He was picked up and taken home at once.

He walked firmly, carrying his own skates, but he remembered nothing and understood nothing. He was asked, "What day is it to-day?" "I do not know." He even forgot that it was Sunday and we had had no lessons. They sent at once to Tula for

a doctor, and put leeches behind his ears, and by the evening he was none the worse for it.

Another time my brother Lyólya, who was eight years old, seeing a big breathing-hole covered with a thin layer of fresh ice, skated right across it. Fortunately the ice did not break until the further end, where he could catch hold of the edge with his hands. Some women who were rinsing out linen at another breathing-hole saw that he was drowning, and fished him out.

He was carried home at once in his wet fur jacket, and rubbed with spirits of wine, and endless Ah's and Oh's were uttered over him. He had had a narrow escape, for it was a very deep place where he went in.

CHAPTER IX

SPORT

WE were always devoted to sport from our earliest childhood.

I can remember my father's favorite dog in those days, an Irish setter called Dora, as well as I can remember myself.

I can remember how they brought round the cart with a very quiet horse between the shafts and we drove out to the marsh, to Degatná or to Malákhovo. My father and sometimes my mother or a coachman sat on the seat, while I and Dora lay on the floor.

When we got to the marsh, my father used to get out, stand his gun butt-down on the ground, and hold it with his left hand to load it. First he poured powder into both barrels, then put in felt wads and rammed them down with his ram-rod. The ram-rod struck on the wad and bounced up again with a sort of metallic noise. My father went on ramming until it jumped right out of the mouth. Then he poured in the shot and wadded that down too. Dora meanwhile fidgeted about, whining impatiently and wagging her thick tail in big sweeps.

While my father splashed through the marsh, we drove round the bank rather behind him and eagerly followed the ranging of the dog, the getting up of the snipe, and the shooting.

My father sometimes shot pretty well, though he often lost his head, and missed frantically.

In the spring we delighted in going with him to shoot the woodcocks as they flew over.[1] We often stood in the Timber Reserve [2] near the "Green Stick," but our favorite place was the bee-run beyond the Vorónka. Once upon a time our bees were kept there and our one-eyed bee-keeper Semyón used to live there in a low-roofed, smoke-blackened hut.

My father was very fond of shooting woodcocks when they flew over in the autumn migration, and a

[1] Andréyevsky's Encyclopædia devotes an article to this sport. It begins immediately after the arrival of the woodcocks in the Spring and is stopped by law, for the preservation of the species, at the end of May (June 12, new style). The birds fly low over the woods in the evening, soon after sunset, in different directions, converging ultimately on a general rendezvous, where the cocks compete, with various exhibitions of grace, agility, and music, for the favor of the hens. They utter peculiar cries as they fly, distinguished, onomatopœically, by the Russians, as "tsikking" or wheepling and "horking," a kind of grunting or quacking. The cocks scuffle and fight in the air on their way to the rendezvous. At nightfall they pair and lie quiet: the woodcock is a polygamous bird. In spite of their low flight, the sport is a difficult one, as it is always carried on in twilight or semi-darkness.

[2] This Timber Reserve begins about 600 yards from the house at Yásnaya Polyána, and marches with the Crown Wood. The Moscow-Kursk Railway runs about two miles from the house.

sort of rivalry grew up between him and our German tutor, Fyódor Fyódorovitch.

Fyódor Fyódorovitch usually went "*zum Eisenbahn*," to the place where the railway cuts through the Crown Wood. But my father's favorite place was beyond the Vorónka.

At dinner-time both would return boasting of their bag and relating their experiences.

When Fyódor Fyódorovitch killed less than my father he used to say the reason was that my father had a dog and he had not.

Once the contrary proved true. My father decided not to go shooting that day, and lent Dora to Fyódor Fyódorovitch. When Fyódor Fyódorovitch had started, my father could not hold out any longer but took a gun and went off to the wood without saying a word to any one. Both came back at dinner-time and my father brought in a brace more than Fyódor Fyódorovitch. According to him, if you have no dog the woodcocks fly nearer and it is far easier to hit them. So Fyódor Fyódorovitch lost his halo, and we were delighted.

There was a short period of two or three years when I used to go out shooting with my father, as a boy. He had a blue Belton called Bulka, at that time, and I used to take out a very intelligent and independent-minded Courland pointer, called "Little 'un."

When my father gave up shooting "Little 'un" always used to go for walks with him, and my father was very fond of him and never went out without him. He used to tell us how "Little 'un" came into his study and invited him to come out walking. At the usual walking time the door of the study would open, and "Little 'un" would come quietly in. If he saw that my father was sitting working at his table, he would look shyly out of the corners of his eyes, and creep about with inaudible footsteps, lifting up his claws and walking on his pads. When my father looked at him, he would answer with an imperceptible movement of the tail and lie down under the table.

"As if he knew that I was busy and must not be interrupted," said my father, amazed at his tact.

. . . . . .

But our favorite sport was coursing with greyhounds. What a pleasure it was when the footman Sergéi Petróvitch came in and woke us up very, very early, before dawn, with a candle in his hand! We jumped up full of energy and happiness, trembling all over in the morning cold; threw on our clothes as quickly as we could, and ran out into the *zala*, where the *samovar* was boiling, and papa was waiting for us.

Sometimes mama came in in her dressing-gown,

PUPILS OF THE COMMON SCHOOLS OF THE REGION, GUESTS OF TOLSTOY AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

and made us put on all sorts of extra woolen stockings and sweaters and gloves.

"What are you going to wear, Lyovótchka?" she would say to papa. "It 's very cold to-day and there is a wind. Only the Kuzmínski [3] overcoat again to-day? You must put on something underneath, if only for my sake!"

Papa would make a face, but give in at last, and put on his short gray overcoat under the other and sally forth. It was beginning to get light. Our horses were brought round, we got on, and rode first to the "other house," or to the kennels, to get the dogs. Agáfya Mikháilovna would be anxiously awaiting us on the steps. In spite of the coldness of the morning, she was bare-headed and lightly clad, with her black jacket open, showing her withered, dirty old bosom, all dusted with snuff. She carried the dog-collars in her lean, knotted hands.

"Have you gone and fed them again?" asked my father severely, looking at the dogs' bulging stomachs.

"Fed them? Not a bit; only just a crust of bread apiece."

"Then what are they licking their chops for?"

"There was a bit of yesterday's oatmeal over."

"I thought as much! All the hares will get away

[3] The Kuzmínski overcoat; that is, an overcoat which Tolstoy had bought at some time from "Uncle Sasha."

again. It really is too bad! Do you do it to spite me?"

"You can't have the dogs running all day on empty stomachs, Lyof Nikoláyevitch," she grunted, going angrily to put on the dogs' collars.

"This is for Winger, this is for Sultan, this is for Darling."

In the corner, under a blanket, lay the smoke-colored Tumán (Fog) and when she came to him he used to wag his tail and growl.

When I stroked his short silky coat, he would stiffen himself all over and growl in an affectionate, humorous sort of way.

"Tumáshka, Tumáshka."

"R-r-r . . . R-r-r . . . R-r-r . . ."

"Tumáshka, Tumáshka!"

"R-r-r . . . R-r-r-r . . ."

Like a cat purring.

At last the dogs were ready, some of them on leashes, others running free; and we rode out at a brisk trot past Bitter Wells and the Grove into the open country.

My father gave the word of command, "Line out!" and indicated the direction we were to go in, and we spread out over the stubble-fields and meadows, whistling and winding about along the lee side of the steep baulks,[4] beating all the bushes with our hunting-

[4] The mezhás or "baulks" are the banks dividing the fields of

crops and gazing keenly at every spot or mark on the earth.

Something white appeared ahead. You would stare hard at it, gather up your reins, examine the leash, and could hardly believe your good luck in having come on a hare at last. You rode up closer and closer, with your eyes gummed on the white thing, and it turned out not to be a hare at all, but a horse's skull. Confound the thing!

You looked at papa and Seryózha. "I wonder if they saw that I mistook that skull for a hare?" Papa sat keen and alert on his English saddle with the wooden stirrups,[5] smoking a cigarette, while Seryózha had got his leash entangled and could n't get it straight.

"Thank heaven, nobody saw me, or what a fool I should have felt." So we rode on.

The horse's even pace began to rock you to sleep at last; you would be feeling rather bored at nothing getting up, when all of a sudden, just at the moment you least expected it, right in front of you, twenty paces away, up jumped a gray hare as if from the bowels of the earth.

The dogs had seen it before you, and started forward, and were in full pursuit already. You would begin to bawl "Tally Ho! Tally Ho!" like a

different owners or crops. Hedges are not used for this purpose in Russia.

[5] That is, with wooden foot rests, instead of metal, for warmth.

madman, flog your horse with all your might and fly after them.

The dogs had come up with the hare; they turned it; they turned it again: the young and fiery Sultan and Darling ran over it, caught up again and ran over it again; and at last the old and experienced Winger, who had been galloping on one side all the time, seized her opportunity and sprang in; the hare gave a helpless cry, and the dogs, burying their fangs in it, in a star-shaped group, began to tug in different directions.

"Let go! Let go!"

We came galloping up, finished off the hare and gave the dogs the "tracks," [6] tearing them off toe by toe and throwing them to our favorites, who caught them in the air; and papa taught us how to strap the hare on the back of the saddle.

We rode on.

After the run we would all be in more cheerful spirits, and get to better places near Yásenki and Retínka. Gray hares got up more often; each of us had his spoils in the saddle-straps by now, and we began to hope for a fox.

Not many foxes turned up. If they did, it was generally Tumáshka, who was middle-aged and fastidious, who distinguished himself. He was sick of

[6] *Pázanki,* tracks of a hare, name given to the last joint of the hind leg.

hares and made no great effort to run after them. But when there was a fox in the case he would gallop at full speed, and it was almost always he who killed.

It was late, and often dark when we got back home.

We unstrapped the hares from the saddles and laid them out on the floor in the entrance-hall.

Mama would come down the stairs with the little ones, and grumble at us for staining the floor again; but papa was on our side and we did not care twopence about the floor.

What did a few stains matter, when we had run down eight gray hares and a fox? And were n't we tired!

One day papa quarreled with Styópa [7] out hunting.

This was near Yágodnoye, about fourteen miles from home.

Styópa was riding through a thin birch-wood. A gray hare jumped under his feet; Styópa let his dogs go, and we ran her down. My father came galloping up, and began to abuse Styópa for running a hare in the wood.

"If you go on like that, you 'll smash all the dogs to pieces against the trees; how can you do such an idiotic thing?"

Styópa answered back; they both lost their tem-

[7] Stephen Behrs, the Countess's brother.

pers and each said some nasty things; and Styópa, greatly offended, handed over his dogs to Seryózha and started to ride home in silence. We spread out over the field and rode off in the opposite direction.

Suddenly we saw a gray hare get up right under Styópa's feet. He started and put spurs to his horse, cried "Tally-ho!" and was on the point of galloping after it, but evidently remembering that he had quarreled with "Lyovótchka," reined in his horse, a hunter called Frou-Frou, and without looking round silently rode away at a foot pace.

The hare turned round in our direction, we let the dogs go and ran it down. When the hare was strapped up, papa remembered about Styópa and was sorry for having been unkind to him.

"Ah! how horrible it is! how beastly!" he said, looking at the dot disappearing over the landscape. "We must catch him up. Seryózha, ride after him and tell him that I beg him not to be angry but to come back; and tell him we ran the hare down!" he shouted after him, when Seryózha, delighted for Styópa's sake, had put spurs to his horse and was already galloping after him.

Styópa soon came back and the coursing went on gaily till the evening, without further misadventures.

. . . . . .

Still more interesting was the coursing over the new snow.

The excitement began over-night. Would the weather settle? Would the snow stop in the night? or would there be a blizzard?

Early in the morning we ran out half-dressed into the *zala* and examined the horizon. If the line of the horizon was clearly defined, that meant that the weather was settled and we could go, but if the horizon melted into the sky, that meant the snow was drifting in the open and the tracks made at night were covered over. We waited for papa or sometimes summoned courage to send to wake him, and at last we were all ready and started out.

This sort of hunting is particularly interesting, because by the tracks of the hare, you can trace out the whole of his nocturnal life. You can see his track where he got up hungry in the evening and started out in search of food. You can see how he tore the snow-covered herbage, pulled down tufts of wormwood, sat down and played, and at last, when he had had his fill of eating and running about, turned resolutely to find a form for the day.

This is where his cunning begins. He doubles, covers his tracks, doubles again, or even makes a double double, and covers his tracks again; and at last, convinced that he has sufficiently confused and hidden his tracks, he digs himself a hole under the warm lee-side of a baulk and lies down.

When you come on his track you have to raise your

hand with the hunting-crop in it and give a long mysterious whistle. Then the rest of the hunters ride up, papa rides forward along the track to disentangle it, and holding our breath with excitement, we creep on behind him.

Once we ran down twelve gray hares and two foxes in the new snow in a single day.

I do not remember exactly when my father gave up hunting; I think it was in the middle of the eighties, at the same time as he became a vegetarian. In October of 1884 he writes to my mother from Yásnaya Polyána: "Went for a ride, the dogs close on my heels. Agáfya Mikháilovna said they would attack the cattle if they were not on a leash, and sent Vaska with me. I wanted to see what had become of my hunting-instinct. After forty years, it is very pleasant to ride out and search for game. But when a hare jumped up, I merely wished him God-speed. The main thing is, one is ashamed."

But even later than that, the passion for sport was not extinct in him. When he was out walking in the spring and heard the wheeple and "hork" of the woodcock, he would break off his conversation, lift up his head, seize his comrade excitedly by the arm, and say: "Listen, listen, there 's a woodcock! Do you hear?"

In the nineties, when he was staying at my house in the Tchórnski District,[8] establishing kitchens for

[8] Also in the Province of Tula.

the starving, a rather touching thing happened. He was fond of riding through the villages on my Kirgiz hunter, and my greyhound, Don, which was used to the horse and always went out with it, often followed him. Once when he was riding in the open he heard some village children near him calling out "A hare, a hare!"

"I looked up," he told me, "and saw a gray hare running towards the forest. It was a long way off, and it was quite out of the question to run it down. But I wanted to see how Don could run. The temptation was too strong for me, and I showed him the hare. Don set off, and imagine my horror when he began to catch him up. I offered up a prayer: 'Escape, for Heaven's sake, escape!' I looked again and saw Don turn him again and again. What was I to do? Fortunately it was quite close to the edge of the forest. The hare dashed into the undergrowth and got away. But if Don had caught him . . . I should have been in despair."

Not wishing to make my father miserable I forbore from telling him that Don did not get home until an hour after he did, and then covered with blood and distended like a barrel. It was evident that he had caught the hare in the undergrowth and eaten him there. But thank Heaven my father never knew about it. That was the one secret which I managed to keep from him all my life.

CHAPTER X

"ANNA KARÉNINA"

I CAN just remember that terrible event, the suicide of one of our neighbors, which my father made use of afterwards in describing the death of Anna Karénina. This was in January, 1872.

Bíbikof, father of the half-witted Nikólenka, who used to come to our Christmas trees, had a housekeeper named Anna Stepánovna. Out of jealousy for the governess she went to Yásenki station, threw herself under the train and was crushed to death. I remember some one arriving at Yásnaya, and telling my father about it; I remember that he started off for Bíbikof's and Yásenki at once, and was present at the post-mortem.

I think I can even recall Anna Stepánovna's face a little; I remember it as round and kind and foolish. I was fond of her for her good-natured, affectionate ways, and was very sorry when I heard of her death. I could not understand how Alexander Bíbikof could give up such a charming woman for another.

I remember my father writing his Alphabet and

A "HUNGER GROUP"

PORTHOUSE MENTIONED IN "ANNA KARÉNINA"

Reading-book in 1871 and 1872: but I cannot at all remember his beginning "Anna Karénina." I probably knew nothing about it at the time. What did it matter to a boy of seven what his father was writing? It was only later, when one kept hearing the name again and again, and bundles of proofs kept arriving and being sent off almost every day, that I understood that "Anna Karénina" was the name of the novel on which my father and mother were both at work. My mother's work seemed much harder than my father's, because we actually saw her at it, and she worked much longer hours than he did. She used to sit in the small drawing-room off the *zala*, at her little writing-table, and spend all her free time writing. Leaning over the manuscript and trying to decipher my father's scrawl with her short-sighted eyes, she used to spend whole evenings at work, and often sat up late at night after everybody else had gone to bed. Sometimes, when anything was written quite illegibly, she would go to my father's study and ask him what it meant. But this was very rare because my mother did not like to disturb him. When it happened, my father would take the manuscript in his hand, ask with some annoyance: "What on earth is the difficulty?" and begin to read it out loud. When he came to the difficult place he would mumble and hesitate, and sometimes had the greatest difficulty in making out, or rather in guessing, what

he had written. He had a very bad handwriting and a terrible habit of inserting whole sentences between the lines, or in the corners of the page, or sometimes right across it. My mother often discovered gross grammatical errors, and pointed them out to my father and corrected them.

When "Anna Karénina" began to come out in the *Russki Vyéstnik*,[1] long galley-proofs were posted to my father and he looked them through and corrected them. At first, the margins would be marked with the ordinary typographical signs, letters omitted, marks of punctuation, and so on; then individual words would be changed, and then whole sentences; erasures and additions began; till, in the end, the proof sheet was reduced to a mass of patches, perfectly black in places, and it was quite impossible to send it back as it stood, because no one but my mother could make head or tail of the tangle of conventional signs, transpositions, and erasures.

My mother would sit up all night copying the whole thing out afresh.

In the morning there lay the pages on her table, neatly piled together, covered all over with her fine clear handwriting, and everything was ready so that when "Lyovótchka" came down he could send the proof-sheets off by post.

[1] A Moscow monthly, founded by Katkóf, who somehow managed to edit at the same time both this and the daily *Moskóvskiya Vyédomosti*, on which "Uncle Kóstya" worked.

My father would carry them off to his study to have "just one last look," and by the evening it was just as bad again; the whole thing had been re-written and messed up once more.

"Sonya my dear, I am very sorry, but I've spoilt all your work again; I promise I won't do it any more," he would say, showing her the passages he had inked over with a guilty air. "We'll send them off to-morrow without fail." But this to-morrow was often put off day by day for weeks or months together.

"There's just one bit I want to look through again," my father would say, but he would get carried away and rewrite the whole thing afresh. There were even occasions when, after posting the proofs, my father remembered some particular words next day and corrected them by telegraph.

Several times, in consequence of these re-writings, the printing of the novel in the *Russki Vyéstnik* was interrupted, and sometimes it did not come out for months together.

When my father was at work on the eighth and last part of "Anna Karénina", the Russo-Turkish War was in progress. It was heralded by the extraordinarily beautiful comet of 1876 and a long series of extraordinarily beautiful Auroræ Boreales, which we spent the whole winter admiring. There was something elemental and menacing in this fiery

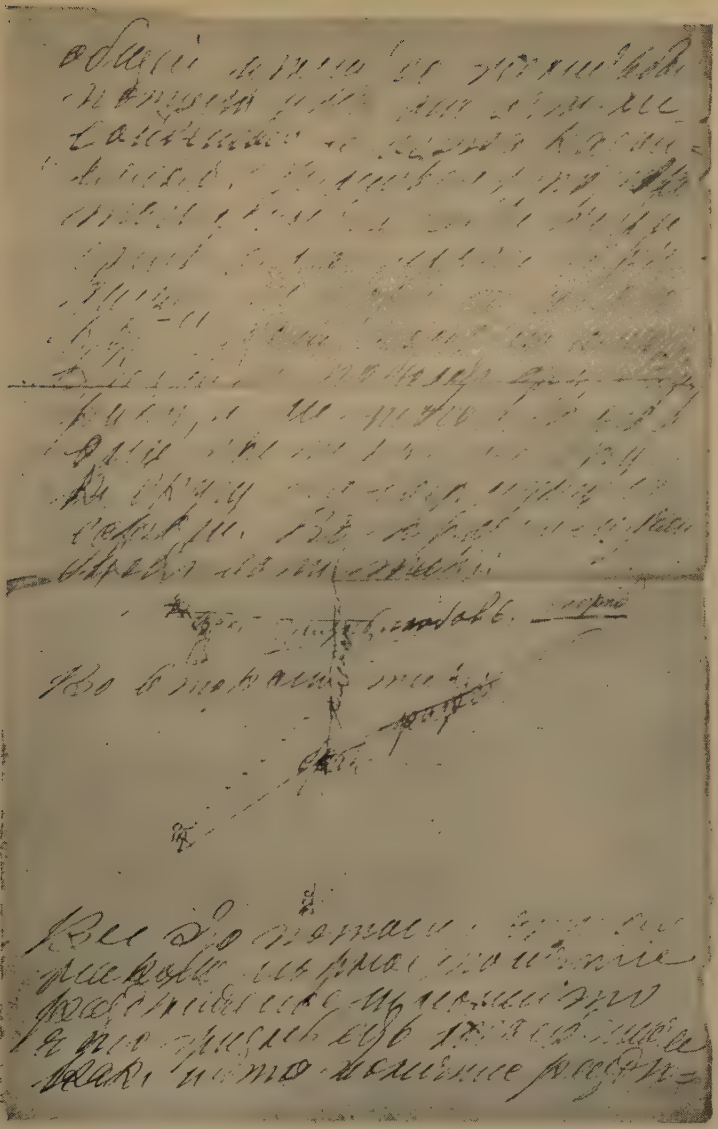
nocturnal glow and in the luster of the splendid trailing star.

During the war, papa and all the household, we children included, were greatly interested. When the newspapers arrived from Tula, one of the grown-ups used to read them aloud, and the whole household collected to listen. We knew all the generals not only by name and patronymic but also by face, for their portraits were to be seen on all the calendars, on cheap broad-sides and even on our chocolates.

The Dyakófs gave us a perfect army of toy Turkish and Russian soldiers for Christmas, and we spent whole days together playing at war with them.

At last we heard that a party of Turkish prisoners had been brought into Tula and we drove over with papa to look at them. I remember how we went into a big courtyard, surrounded by a stone wall and saw a number of stalwart, good-looking men in red fezzes and loose blue breeches.

Papa walked boldly up to them and entered into conversation. Some of them talked Russian and asked for cigarettes. He gave them cigarettes and money. Then he began to question them about their mode of life. He made great friends with them, and made two of the biggest wrestle holding each other by the belt. Then one of the Turks wrestled with a Russian soldier.



FACSIMILE OF A TOLSTOY MANUSCRIPT

"What good-looking, agreeable, gentle creatures!" said my father as we went away; but it seemed odd to me, that he should be so friendly with those terrible Turks whom we were bound to hate and to fight because they massacred Bulgarians and waged war against our troops.

In the last part of "Anna Karénina" my father, in describing the end of Vronski's career, showed his disapproval of the Volunteer movement and the Panslavonic Committees, and this led to a quarrel with Katkóf. I can remember how angry my father was when Katkóf refused to print those chapters as they stood and asked him either to leave out part of them or to soften them down, and finally returned the manuscript, and printed a short note in his paper to say that after the death of the heroine the novel was, strictly speaking, at an end; but that the author had added an epilogue of two printed sheets, in which he related such and such facts, and that he would very likely "develop those chapters for the separate edition of his novel." In consequence of this, a rupture ensued between my father and Katkóf and they never became friends again.

In connection with Katkóf I remember, among other things, a very interesting saying of my father's. He said that, as a rule, people who are masters of literary form are no good at talking, and *per contra*, eloquent people are entirely incapable of writing.

As an example of the first category, he adduced Katkóf, who according to him mumbled and stammered in conversation and could not put two words together;[2] and in the second category he numbered many well-known speakers, T. N. Pleváko[3] among them.

In concluding this chapter, I wish to say a few words about my father's own opinion of "Anna Karénina."

In 1875 he wrote to N. N. Strakhof: "I must confess, that I was delighted by the success of the last piece of 'Anna Karénina.' I had by no means expected it, and to tell you the truth I was amazed, that people should be pleased by such ordinary and *empty* stuff."

The same year he wrote to Fet: "It is two months since I have defiled my hands with ink or my heart with thoughts. But now I am setting to work again on my *tedious*, *vulgar* 'Anna Karénina,' with only one wish, to clear it out of the way as soon as possible and give myself leisure for other occupations; not schoolmastering, however, which I am fond of, but wish to give up; it takes up too much time."

In 1878, when the novel was nearing its end, he wrote again to Strakhof: "I am frightened by the

[2] Katkóf had on this account been a failure as a professor in Moscow University in his young days.

[3] A Moscow barrister, famous for the half-Irish and half-Oriental eloquence of his speeches.

feeling that I am getting into my summer mood again. I *loathe* what I have written. The proof sheets for the April number, "of 'Anna Karénina' in the *Russki Vyéstnik*," now lie on my table, and I really have not the heart to correct them. *Everything* in them is *beastly* and the whole thing ought to be rewritten—all that has been printed too—scrapped and melted down, thrown away, renounced; I ought to say: 'I am sorry, I won't do it any more'; and try and write something fresh instead of all this incoherent, neither-fish-nor-flesh-nor-fowlish stuff."

That was how my father felt towards his novel while he was writing it. Afterwards I often heard him say much harsher things about it.

"What difficulty is there in writing about how an officer fell in love with a married woman?" he used to say. "There 's no difficulty in it and above all no good in it."

I am quite convinced, that, if my father could have done so, he would long ago have destroyed this novel which he never liked, and which he always wanted to disown.

CHAPTER XI

THE LETTER-BOX

IN the summer when both families were together at Yásnaya, our own and the Kuzmínskis, when the house and the annex were both full of people, the family and guests, we used to establish our Letter-box. It originated long before, when I was still quite small and had only just learnt to write, and it continued with intervals till the middle of the eighties. The box hung on the landing at the top of the stairs, beside the grandfather clock; and every one dropped his compositions into it, the verses, articles, or stories, that he had written on topical subjects in the course of the week.

On Sundays, we all used to collect in the *zala* at the round table; the box was solemnly opened, and one of the grown-ups, often my father himself, used to read the contents aloud.

All the papers were unsigned, and it was a point of honor not to peep at the handwriting; but, in spite of this, we almost always guessed the author pretty correctly, either by the style, or by his self-consciousness, or else by the strained indifference of his expres-

sion. When I was a boy, and for the first time wrote a set of French verses for the Letter-box, I was so shy at having them read out, that I hid under the table, and sat there the rest of the evening until I was pulled out by force. For a long time after, I wrote no more and was always fonder of hearing other people's compositions read than my own.

All the "events" of our life at Yásnaya Polyána found their echo one way or another in the Letter-box and no one was spared, not even the grown-ups. All our secrets, all our love affairs, all the incidents of our complicated life, were revealed in the Letter-box and both the family and the visitors were good-humoredly made fun of.

Unfortunately much of the correspondence has been lost by now, but parts of it are preserved by some of us in copies or by memory. I cannot remember all the interesting things that there were in it; but here are a few of the best, from the period of the eighties.

. . . . . .

The old fogey continues his questions. Why, when a woman or an old man enters the room, does every well-bred person not only offer them a seat, but give them up his own?

Why do they insist on making Ushakóf or a Servian Officer who comes to pay a call stay to tea or dinner?

Why is it considered wrong to let an older person or a woman help you on with your overcoat and so on? And why are all these charming rules considered obligatory

towards others, when ordinary people come every day, and we not only do not ask them to sit down, or to stop to dinner, or to spend the night, or render them any service, but would look on it as the height of impropriety?

Where do those people end to whom we are under these obligations?

By what characteristics are the one sort distinguished from the others?

And are not all these rules of politeness bad, if they do not extend to all sorts of people? And is not what we call politeness an illusion and a very ugly illusion?

LYOF TOLSTOY.[1]

Question: Which is the most "beastly plague," a cattle-plague case for a farmer, or the ablative case for a schoolboy?

LYOF TOLSTOY.

Answers are requested to the following questions:

Why do Ustyúsha, Masha, Alyóna, Peter, etc., have to bake, boil, sweep, empty slops, wait at table . . . while the gentry have only to eat, gobble, quarrel, make slops and eat again?

LYOF TOLSTOY.

My Aunt Tánya, when she was in a bad temper because the coffee had been spilt, or because she had been beaten at croquet, was in the habit of sending every one to the devil. My father wrote the following story "Susóitchik" about it.

. . . . . .

[1] Tolstoy's signature is added here only for clearness. His contributions were of course unsigned like every one else's. They are preserved in the Historical Museum in Moscow.

TOLSTOY AND HIS DAUGHTER, ALEXÁNDRA

The devil, not the chief devil, but one of the rank and file, the one charged with the management of social affairs, Susóitchik by name, was greatly perturbed on the 6th of August, 1884. From the early morning onwards, people kept arriving who had been sent him by Tatyána Kuzmínski.

The first to arrive was Alexander Mikháilovitch Kuzmínski;[2] the second was Mísha Islávin; the third was Vyatchesláf; the fourth was Seryózha Tolstoy, and last of all came old Lyof Tolstoy, senior, accompanied by Prince Urúsof. The first visitor, Alexander Mikháilovitch, caused Susóitchik no surprise, for he often paid Susóitchik visits in obedience to the behests of his wife. "What, has your wife sent you again?" "Yes," replied the Presiding Judge of the District Court shyly, not knowing what explanation he could give of the cause of his visit.

"You come here very often. What do you want?"

"Oh, nothing in particular; she just sent her compliments," murmured Alexander Mikháilovitch, departing from the exact truth with some effort.

"Very good, very good; you are always welcome; she is one of my best workers."

Before Susóitchik had time to show the Judge out, in came all the children, laughing and jostling and hiding one behind the other.

"What brought you here, youngsters? Did my little Tányetchka send you? That's right; no harm in coming. Give my compliments to Tánya, and tell her that I am always at her service. Come whenever you like: old Susóitchik may be of use to you."

[2] "Uncle Sasha," her husband.

No sooner had the young folk made their bow, than old Lyof Tolstoy appeared with Prince Urúsof.

"Aha! So it 's the old boy! Many thanks to Tányetchka. It 's a long time since I have seen you, old chap! Well and hearty? And what can I do for you?"

Lyof Tolstoy shuffled about, rather abashed.

Prince Urúsof, mindful of the etiquette of diplomatic receptions, stepped forward and explained Tolstoy's appearance by his wish to make acquaintance with Tatyána Andréyevna's oldest and most faithful friend.

"Les amis de nos amis sont nos amis."

"Ha, ha, ha, quite so!" said Susóitchik. "I must reward her for to-day's work. Be so kind, Prince, as to deliver the marks of my good-will to her."

And he handed over the insignia of an order in a morocco case. The insignia consisted of a necklace of imps' tails to be worn about the throat, and two toads, one to be worn on the bosom and the other on the bustle.

LYOF TOLSTOY.

THE IDEALS OF YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA[3]

Lyof Nikoláyevitch (Tolstoy)	1. Poverty, peace, and concord. 2. To burn everything he worshiped, to worship everything he burnt.
Sófya Andréyevna (his wife)	1. Seneca. 2. To have 150 babies who will never grow up.
Tatyána Andréyevna (Aunt Tánya)	1. Perpetual youth. 2. The emancipation of women.

[3] From internal evidence, one may guess that this is also by the author of "What Aunt Sonya Likes and What Aunt Tánya Likes."

Ilyá[4]	Carefully to conceal that he has a heart and to look as if he had killed a hundred wolves.
"Big" Masha[5]	A communal family, founded on the principles of grace and watered with the tears of sensibility.
Mme. Seuron[6]	Elegance.
Vera Kuzmínski	Uncle Lálya.[7]
Prince Urúsof	A long-headed game at croquet and to forget all else terrestrial.
All the children	To stuff themselves all day with all manner of scraps, and from time to time, for the sake of variety, to yell their heads off.
Tánya Tolstoy	A close-cropped head. Spiritual refinement and new shoes every day.
Lyólya (Lyof Tolstoy, junior)	To be editor of the *Novosti*.[8]

[4] The author of these "Reminiscences."

[5] Masha Kuzmínski.

[6] A French lady who acted as governess, and wrote some entertaining Memoirs of her life with the Tolstoys.

[7] Uncle Lálya, i. e., Count Tolstoy. Lálya and Lyólya both stand for Lyof (Leo).

[8] Count Lyof Tolstoy the younger did as a matter of fact take to writing; among other things he wrote "The Chopin Prelude," an answer to his father's "Kreutzer Sonata."

Princess Obolénski	Universal happiness and family-life all round.
"Little" Masha	The sound of guitar-strings.
Triphónovna	Their marriage.

TO AUNT TÁNYA

When the sun was shining daily
Then every one lived gaily
  And like a marriage-bell.

But it somehow struck Tatyána
That at Yásnaya Polyána
  One cannot always dwell.

And it took but small discerning
That the children need some learning
  If they 're to get on well.

And the girls must have some training
And a deal of hard explaining
  To become like Mademoiselle.

So they got a lot of books
And in spite of grievous looks
  Lessons went along.

But when it came to Genesis,
In spite of all their menaces,
  Everything went wrong.

Masha sat with visage scowling,
Little Vera started howling:
"No more work for me!"

And one day when they were readin'
Of the driving out from Eden,
Vera up and thus spake she:

"In the Bible we are telled
"How that Adam was expelled
"And Eve was sent away.

"Don't you teach such stuff to me,
"For it 's plain as plain can be
"*Que ce n'est pas vrai.*

"Why, O why, should we be tortured
"And not let into the orchard
"The apple-trees to shake?

"For it was n't so in Eden;
"You could get at things to feed on;
"No one locked the gate.

"Why did they punish Adam?
"It was you who told us, madam;
"For *curiosité!*

"And his punishment was such
"Just because he knew too much;
"I will not sin that way!"

Now their mother 's fairly graveled
How the knot can be unraveled;
And I don't wonder!

LYOF TOLSTOY.

AUNT SONYA AND AUNT TÁNYA; AND GENERALLY SPEAKING, WHAT AUNT SONYA LIKES AND WHAT AUNT TÁNYA LIKES [9]

Aunt Sonya likes making underlinen, and doing *broderie anglaise* and all sorts of beautiful work. Aunt Tánya likes making frocks, and telling fortunes. Aunt Sonya likes flowers, and in the early spring is seized with a passion for gardening. She puts on a troubled look, digs in the beds, consults with the gardener and astonishes Aunt Tánya by knowing the Latin names for all the flowers, until Aunt Tánya says to herself, "What a dungeon of learning she is!"

Aunt Tánya says that she cannot stand flowers, and that it is not worth while bothering yourself with such garbage; but secretly she delights in them.

Aunt Sonya bathes in a gray costume and goes sedately down the steps into the water, gasping with the cold; then makes a graceful dive and swims right away with smooth even strokes.

Aunt Tánya puts on a torn American-cloth cap with pink chintz ribbons under the chin; goes with a desperate plump into the depths, and at once turns over motionless on her back.

Aunt Sonya is afraid when the children jump into the water.

[9] Attributed by the author of this book, in an earlier chapter, to "Aunt Tánya."

Aunt Tánya calls the children cowards if they are afraid to jump.

Aunt Sonya puts on her spectacles, collects the children, and walks with a resolute step into the plantation, saying, "Mind you keep close to me, my little dears," and likes to walk slowly about the forest and pick birch-mushrooms,[10] not despising even gripe-agarics,[11] and says, "Don't forget, to pick the gripe-agarics, children; your father is very fond of them salted, and they will all be eaten by spring."

Aunt Tánya, when she is going for a walk in the forest, is dreadfully afraid that somebody will prevent her, or come dogging her heels; and when the children turn up she says severely, "Well, run along, but for Heaven's sake keep out of my sight; and if you get lost don't howl." She dashes quickly round all the woods and down all the hollows, and likes picking aspen toadstools.[12] She always carries ginger nuts in her pocket.

In difficult junctures Aunt Sonya always says to herself, "Who needs me most? To whom can I be most useful?"

Aunt Tánya says to herself, "Who can be most useful to me? Whom can I send anywhere?"

Aunt Sonya washes in cold water. Aunt Tánya is afraid of cold water.

Aunt Sonya likes reading philosophy and holding learned conversations; she enjoys taking Aunt Tánya's breath away with terrible long words, and completely succeeds in her ambition.

[10] *Boletus viscidus.*

[11] Agaricus torminosus. A mushroom capable of causing some discomfort as the name implies; but rendered innocuous by the pickling process. A common food with the peasants, but not among the gentry.

[12] *Boletus aurantiacus,* or *luridus,* a large and highly-colored fungus which grows in woods in the late summer.

Aunt Tánya likes reading novels and talking about love.

Aunt Sonya cannot stand pouring out tea.

Nor can Aunt Tánya.

Aunt Sonya cannot stand toadies and religious maniacs.

Aunt Tánya is very fond of both!

Aunt Sonya, when she plays croquet, always finds some other occupation to fill up her spare moments, such as scattering sand on the stony places or mending the mallets, and says that she is too active to sit doing nothing.

Aunt Tánya follows the game with furious concentration, hating her opponents and forgetful of everything else.

Aunt Sonya is short-sighted and does not see the cobwebs in the corners and the dust on the furniture. Aunt Tánya sees them and has them swept away.

Aunt Sonya adores children. Aunt Tánya is far from adoring them.

When the children fall down and bump themselves against the floor, Aunt Sonya caresses them, and says, "Never mind, my pet! never mind, my darling child! We 'll bump this horrid floor. Take that! Take that!" And the child and Aunt Sonya both bump the floor furiously.

Aunt Tánya, when the children bump themselves, rubs the place savagely, and says, "Confound you, you brat, and the mother that bore you! Where the devil are the nurses, confound them all? And why don't you bring me some cold water instead of all standing there like stuck pigs?"

When the children are ill, Aunt Sonya consults medical works with a gloomy air and gives them opium. When the children are ill, Aunt Tánya scolds them and gives them castor oil.

Aunt Sonya likes dressing herself up every now and then

in something out of the way, and taking everybody by surprise, when she goes in to dinner in the *zala* on Sundays. Aunt Tánya also likes putting on fine clothes, but likes something that makes her look younger.

Aunt Sonya sometimes likes doing her hair *à la* injured innocence, and then assumes the aspect of a woman persecuted by fate and man, and yet so gentle and innocent withal, with her pigtail down her back and her hair combed smooth in front, that you say to yourself, "Merciful Heaven, who is the rascal that could injure her? and how could that angel endure it?" and tears of compassion spring to the eyes at the very thought.

Aunt Tánya likes doing her hair high, with the nape of the neck uncovered, and locks hanging low on the forehead; she imagines that her eyes look bigger that way and she blinks them continually.

Aunt Tánya always likes to have the last word in a quarrel.

Aunt Sonya, after a quarrel, likes to start talking again as if nothing had happened.

Aunt Sonya never eats anything at breakfast and if she does once in a way boil herself a couple of eggs, she gives them up to any one who wants them. Aunt Tánya when she gets up says to herself: "What would my Lady fancy?"

Aunt Sonya eats quickly, in small mouthfuls, like a hen pecking, with her head bent low over her plate. Aunt Tánya stuffs her mouth full, and if any one looks at her while she is eating, tries to look as if she only ate because she was obliged to, and not because it gave her any pleasure.

Aunt Sonya likes sitting at the piano, and playing and

singing to the children in a gentle voice, "Gop, gop, gop! break into a gallop!" while the children lark about.

Aunt Tánya cannot stand mixing up children and music, but has no objection to her own children dancing too when Aunt Sonya plays, only she conceals the fact.

Aunt Sonya makes clothes for her children with enough turned up to allow for another fifteen years' growth.

Aunt Tánya leaves no margin, and the first time they go to the wash, they have to be re-made.

Aunt Sonya likes evening parties—Aunt Tánya cannot stand them.

Aunt Sonya is always feeling anxious about somebody, especially when they have gone away on a journey. Aunt Tánya, once she has said good-by, tries to forget them and bothers her head no more.

Aunt Sonya when she is enjoying any pleasure or festivity immediately mingles a feeling of melancholy with her enjoyment. Aunt Tánya gives herself up to the pleasure of the moment.

Aunt Sonya is very delicate about other people's property, so that when Aunt Tánya has mushroom-pie she says, "Are you sure I am not robbing you, Tánya dear?" (when it is a matter of somebody else's property Aunt Sonya always says "you" instead of "thee" and "thou") and so saying, takes an end. Aunt Tánya despairingly and persuasively begs her to take the middle, but in vain: the petition is rejected.

When Aunt Tánya does not get new bread for breakfast she asks Aunt Sonya, "Have n't you any new bread to-day?" and without waiting for an answer, picks up the bread and smells it, then smells the butter; and finally pushes them both to one side, and cries, "The bread is always stale!

The butter always smells of the cow!" and nevertheless goes on eating other people's bread and other people's butter.

The question which on the whole has the best of it, Aunt Tánya or Aunt Sonya, is not yet solved.

We often had visits at Yásnaya from a crazy sort of religious maniac of the name of Blokhín. He suffered from megalomania, founded on the claim that he had "passed through all the ranks of nobility" and was equal to the Emperor Alexander II and to God. Consequently he lived exclusively to "have a good time", kept an "open money bank" and called himself a Prince and "Knight of all the Orders." When he was asked why he had no money and begged for alms, he used to smile naïvely, and answer, unabashed, that there had been some difficulty about remittance, but that he had "sent in a report" and would get it in a few days. With Blokhín who is described in the following "Asylum Bulletin" under number 21, my father compares many of the other patients at Yásnaya Polyána, all of whom he reckoned as dangerous and requiring treatment; but Blokhín himself he compares with Sasha, a little girl still at the breast, and he considers him the only one who can be certified as cured, because he is the only one who reasons really consistently.

. . . . . .

BULLETIN OF THE PATIENTS AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA LUNATIC ASYLUM

No. 1. (Lyóf Nikoláyevitch Tolstoy.)[13] Sanguine complexion. One of the harmless sort. The patient is subject to the mania known to German lunatic doctors as Weltverbesserungswahn. The patient's hallucination consists in thinking that you can change other people's lives by words. *General symptoms:* discontent with all the existing order of things; condemnation of every one except himself, and irritable garrulity quite irrespective of his audience; frequent transitions from fury and irritability to an unnatural tearful sentimentality. *Special symptoms:* busying himself with unsuitable occupations, such as cleaning and making boots, mowing hay, etc. *Treatment:* complete indifference of all surrounding the patient to what he says; occupations designed to use up all his energy.

No. 2. (The Countess Sófya Andréyevna.) Belongs also to the harmless sort, but has to be shut up at times. The patient is subject to the *mania petulanta hurryupica maxima.* The patient's hallucination consists in thinking that every one demands everything of her and that she cannot manage to get everything done. *Symptoms:* solution of problems which are not proposed; answering questions before they have been put; repelling accusations which have not been made; and satisfaction of demands which have not been put forward. The patient suffers from the Blokhín-bank mania. *Treatment:* hard work. *Diet:* segregation from frivolous worldly people. A good

[13] The names of the patients have been added by the author of the book.

effect would be produced in this case by a moderate dose of bogeymanwater.[14]

No. 3. (Uncle Sásha Kuzmínski, Aunt Tánya's husband.) The patient formerly suffered from *mania senatorialis ambitiosa magna*, complicated by *mania emolumenti pecuniarii*. Is now in process of being cured. The patient's malady expresses itself at present in the desire to unite the functions of his own yard-man[15] with the calling of Presiding Judge of the District Court. *General symptoms:* unnatural quiet, want of self-confidence. *Special symptoms:* useless digging in the earth, and just as useless reading of journalistic productions, and a fitful and gloomy disposition, expressing itself in outbursts of ill-temper. *Treatment:* more intimate acquaintance with the questions of life, more reckoning with reality, more gentleness and more confidence about those principles which he considers fundamental.

No. 4. (Madame Seuron.) The patient suffers from *comme-il-fautis simplex*, complicated with vestiges of *sacra-cordia catholica*. *General symptoms:* want of clearness in view of life combined with resolute assuredness of manner. Actions are better than words. *Special symptoms:* frivolous conversation combined with strictness of life. The patient is strongly infected with the prevalent Blokhín-bank mania. *Treatment:* morality and love for her son. The prognosis is favorable.

No. 5. (One of the daughters.) Suffers from *seuronophilia*, a very dangerous disease. Radical treatment: marriage.

[14] Bogey-man-water, i. e., to be scolded and frightened.
[15] *Dvórnik*, concierge.

No. 6. (Aunt Tánya.) The patient suffers from the mania known as *mania demonica completica*, a rare malady affording little hope of cure. The patient belongs to the dangerous category. Origin of the disease, success in youth and the habit of satisfied vanity with no moral principles of life. *Symptoms:* fear of imaginary personal devils and a particular affection for their works and for every sort of temptation to luxury, malice, and indolence. Anxiety about that life which does not exist, and indifference to that which does exist. The patient feels herself perpetually in the snares of the Devil, likes to be in his snares and at the same time is afraid of him. The patient suffers acutely from the epidemic mania of Blokhinism. The issue of the case is doubtful because recovery from the fear of the Devil is rendered possible only by renunciation of his works. But his works occupy the whole of the patient's life. Two different *treatments* are possible: either complete surrender to the Devil and his works for the purpose of tasting all their bitterness, or complete estrangement of the patient from the works of the Devil. In the first alternative, two large doses of compromising coquetry, two million roubles, two months of complete idleness and a summons before the magistrate for words calculated to lead to a breach of the peace would have an excellent effect. In the second alternative: three or four children to be nursed by the patient herself, a life full of occupation and mental development. *Diet:* in the first alternative, truffles and champagne, frocks made entirely of lace, three new ones *per diem*. In the second alternative: *shtchi* (cabbage soup), *kasha*, with sweet curd-pies on Sundays and a dress of the same invariable cut and color for the rest of her life.

No. 7. (Seryózha Tolstoy, the son.) The patient suf-

fers from a mania called *universalis libertatis pàlaver.* The patient belongs to the category of the nearly harmless. *General symptoms:* the desire to know whatever other people know, however useless to himself, and the lack of all desire to know what it is useful for him to know. *Special symptoms:* pride, self-assurance, and irritability. The case has not yet been fully investigated but the patient also suffers very acutely from the Prince Blokhín mania. *Treatment:* forced labor, and above all, service or love or both. *Diet:* less confidence in learning and profounder study of what he has already learned.

No. 8. (The author of these "Reminiscences.") *Mania Prochoris egoistica complicata.* The patient belongs to the dangerous category. His hallucination consists in thinking that the whole world centers about him; and that the more insignificant and absurd the occupations are with which he is busied, the more interested the world will be in those occupations. *General symptoms:* the patient cannot occupy himself with anything unless Prokhór is present to admire him. But inasmuch as the higher the order of occupations the smaller is the number of admiring Prokhórs, the patient invariably descends to the lowest order of occupations. *Special symptoms:* the patient is excited to the point of ecstasy by every kind of approval, and without it sinks into apathy. The patient is strongly affected by the Blokhín epidemic. A difficult case. The issue is two-fold: either the patient will get accustomed to submitting himself to the judgment of the inferior sort of people, the Prokhórs, perpetually lowering himself in proportion to the facility of their approval, or this may disgust him and he may try tc take an interest in activities satisfactory to himself independent of all Prokhórs. *Treatment:* impossible. *Diet:*

abstention from the society of people of a lower order of culture than himself.

No. 9. The patient is subject to a complicated malady called *mania metaphysica*, complicated by hypertrophy of corrupted ambition, *vanitas diplomatica highlifica*. He suffers from the perpetual discord between his habits and his philosophy of life. *General symptoms:* low spirits and the desire to appear gay and lively, love of solitude. *Special symptoms:* reversion to old habits and discontent with himself; excessive irritability and excitement in the communication of his own ideas. The only treatment of undoubted efficacy is re-union with his family.

No. 10. (Masha Kuzmínski.) The patient has only lately arrived at the asylum, and has not yet been properly investigated but the following diagnosis has been arrived at: *Mania kapnisto-meshtcheriano*[16]*-petersburgiana*, complicated with *hypertrophia modestica*. *General symptoms:* want of animation, lassitude, and dreaming of partners; the repetition of convulsive movements of the feet at the sound of music, though without undulation of the body. Acutely subject to *Blokhinismus simplex*. Radical treatment needed: Bogeymanwater and strong affection for a good man.

No. 11. Patient still subject to investigation. The patient has so far shown clear symptoms of the mania known to Russian lunatic doctors as "Yernostiphikhotitude" i.e. his hallucination consists in thinking that what is wanted is not the thing itself or the feeling itself, or the knowledge itself, but something resembling the thing, the feeling, and the knowledge. *Special symptoms:* the desire to appear

[16] The adjectives are formed from the proper names Kapnist and Meshtchérsky, friends of the Tolstoy family.

MIKHÁIL, ANDRÉI, AND TATYÁNA, TOLSTOY'S DAUGHTER

omniscient and to be remarked by every one. The malady is not very dangerous. *Treatment*, already begun to be applied: humiliation.

No. 12. (Masha Tolstoy, the daughter.) Patient still under investigation. Belongs to the category of the perfectly harmless. The symptoms which make her stay in the asylum still necessary are merely the following: passion for eikon lamps, pointed toes, ribbons, bustles, etc. Infected with the Prince Blokhín epidemic. Medical treatment not necessary; only the following diet: removal from the company of crazy people; after this the patient can be certified as cured.

No. 13. (Vera Kuzmínski.) Dangerous. The patient suffers from the mania known among Portuguese doctors as *mania outspokianica honesta maxima.* Pleasant exterior and the idea that every one is occupied with that exterior. *Symptoms:* shyness, placidity, and bursts of outspokenness. Acutely subject to the Prince Blokhín epidemic. *Treatment:* tenderness and love. Prognosis favorable.

No. 14. The patient suffers from the mania known to English doctors as *maxima anglica as-you-like-itude.*[17] The patient's hallucination consists in thinking that you must not do what you want, but what other people want. Minor degree of the Prince Blokhín epidemic. *Treatment:* faith in what, in her heart of hearts, her conscience thinks right, and disbelief in what is considered so by other people.

No. 15. Patient still under investigation. Hallucination: roubles and Uncle Lálya. Belongs to the category of the perfectly harmless. Only faintly affected by Blokhinism. Cure possible.

[17] The words "as-you-like" are in English in the original.

No. 16.[18] Under investigation. Mania: doing up buttons. Infected with Blokhinism.

No. 17, 18, 19. Under investigation. Only faintly affected with Blokhinism.

No. 20. (The baby, Sasha Tolstoy.) Still in charge of wet-nurse. Completely healthy and may be certified for removal without danger. In case of continued residence at Yásnaya Polyána is liable to undoubted infection, as she will soon discover that the milk which she enjoys was bought from the baby born of her wet-nurse.

No. 21. (The idiot Blokhín.) Prince Blokhín. Military Prince, has passed through all ranks of nobility, Knight of all the Orders of Blokhín. The patient's hallucination consists entirely in this: that other people are bound to work for him, but he has only to receive money, keep an open bank, have carriages, horses, clothes, and luxuries of every description, and have a good time. The patient is not dangerous and can be certified as cured, together with No. 20. The fact that his, Prince Blokhín's, life, may be spent in enjoying himself while everybody else's must be spent in labor, is explained by the Prince, with perfect consistency, by the fact that he has passed through all the ranks of nobility, but no explanation of any sort can be given for an idle life in the case of other people.

No. 22. (Uncle Seryózha, Sergéi Nikoláyevitch, Tolstoy's brother.) The patient has already been investigated before, but has come back to the asylum for further treatment. He is not dangerous. He suffers from the mania known to Spanish doctors as *mania katkoviana antiqua nobilis russica* and from inveterate Beethovenophobia. *General symptoms:* after nourishment the patient experi-

[18] Nos. 16, 17, 18, 19 are the small children.—I. T.

ences an irrepressible desire to have the *Moskóvskiya Vyédomosti*[19] read to him and is dangerous in this respect, that in insisting on having the *Moskóvskiya Vyédomosti* read to him he is liable to use violence. After taking nourishment in the evening he becomes dangerous again at the sound of "The Spinner,"[20] stamping his feet, waving his arms and giving vent to savage outcries. *Special symptoms:* is unable to take up all his cards at once, but takes them into his hand one by one. Once a month, for a reason not yet ascertained, he drives into a town called Krapívna[21] and passes his time there in the oddest and most unsuitable occupations. Greatly preoccupied by female beauty. *Treatment:* friendship with peasants and intercourse with Nihilists. *Diet:* not to smoke, not to drink, and not to go to the circus.

LYOF TOLSTOY.

. . . . . .

A POEM BY MY FATHER, DEDICATED TO MY SISTER TÁNYA

In the morning dressed in drab,
Pink at dinner as a crab:
What has worked the transformation
From a grub to a carnation?
If to know the cause you list
You must go and ask Kapníst.[22]

. . . . . .

[19] Katkóf's daily paper. The organ of philosophic Tory nationalism.

[20] A certain Russian peasant-song.—I. T.

[21] Sergéi Tolstoy was District Marshal of the noblesse.—I. T. In that capacity he would have to attend in Krapívna, the District chief town, to many sorts of business, presiding over the meeting of the District Zemstvo, the School and Land Boards, etc.

[22] My sister Tánya at that time often went on visits to Count Kapníst's house.—I. T.

HEXAMETERS BY V. V. T.

Boldly I set me to write a critique for the family Post-box:
Little I found to praise, but many a matter of censure.
Dipping my pen into poison, I harbored mercy for no one.
What was the cause that my heart so suddenly stopped in its beating?
Terrible qualms in the midriff, knees both quaking beneath me.
Gods of Olympus declare the cause of my great trepidation!
Harken, the Gods make answer, and Zeus the Thunderer speaketh:
"Pitiful censor of others? Know'st thou not that a censor
"Greater than thou thyself, Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Strakhof,[23]
"Dwelleth in Yásnaya now, ready to go on the war-path,
"Lay thee low in the dust with an epitaph writ on thy tombstone,
"Full of the venom of hate, for a wholesome example to others?"
Jupiter held his peace. Black night fell over the landscape.
Still I quaked as I sat; but at last recovered my courage,
Henceforth vowing to write you my future adventures in rickety verses.

[23] A gentleman of remarkable benignity, though a critic by profession; mentioned below in Chapter XIII.

CHAPTER XII

SERGÉI NIKOLÁYEVITCH TOLSTOY

I CAN remember my Uncle Seryózha (Sergéi) from my earliest childhood. He lived at Pirogóvo, twenty miles from Yásnaya, and visited us pretty often.

As a young man he was very handsome. He had the same features as my father, but he was slenderer and more aristocratic-looking. He had the same oval face, the same nose, the same intelligent gray eyes, and the same thick overhanging eyebrows; but the real difference between his face and my father's may be measured by the fact that in those distant days when my father cared for his personal appearance, he was always worrying about his ugliness, while Uncle Seryózha was universally considered, and really was, a very handsome man.

This is what my father says about Uncle Seryózha in his fragmentary Reminiscences:

I and Mítenka (Dimitri) were chums, Nikólenka I revered; but Seryózha I admired enthusiastically and imitated;[1] I loved him and wished to *be* him. I admired his

[1] The order of the Tolstoy family was as follows: Nikolái (d.

handsome exterior, his singing—he was always a singer—his drawing, his gaiety, and above all, however strange a thing it may seem to say, his self-confident egoism.[1a]

I always remembered myself, was conscious of myself, always divined, rightly or wrongly, what others thought about me and felt towards me; and this spoilt the joy of life for me. This was probably the reason why I particularly delighted in the opposite of this in other people, namely, self-confident egoism. That is what I especially loved in Seryózha; though the word "loved" is inexact. I loved Nikólenka, but I admired Seryózha as something alien and incomprehensible to me. It was a human life very beautiful, but completely incomprehensible to me, mysterious, and therefore especially attractive.

He died only a few days ago, and while he was ill and while he was dying he was just as inscrutable and just as dear to me as he had been in the distant days of our childhood.

In those latter days, in our old age, he was fonder of me, valued my attachment more, was prouder of me, wanted to agree with me but could not, and remained just the same as he had always been, namely, something quite apart, only himself, handsome, aristocratic, proud, and above all, truthful and sincere to a degree that I never met in any other man. He was what he was; he concealed nothing and did not wish to appear anything different.

I wanted to be with Nikólenka, to talk and think with him; while Seryózha I only wanted to imitate. This imitation began from my earliest childhood.

1860); Dimitri (d. 1856); Sergéi (d. 1904); Lyof, the novelist; and Mary, the nun.

[1a] Literally, "The directness of his egoism," i. e., the immediate relation between his ego and that on which it acted.

TOLSTOY WITH THE WIFE OF HIS ELDEST BROTHER, COUNT SERGÉI NIKOLÁYEVITCH

She had been a chorus girl in a Gipsy singing-troupe

We were always delighted when his barouche, drawn by three splendid horses abreast, in plated harness with bells, drove up to the house and out stepped Uncle Seryózha, in a broad-brimmed black felt hat and a long black overcoat, very handsome and "boyardly." Papa used to come out from his study to meet him, held his hand while he kissed him, and mama used to run out delightedly into the hall, ask after Márya Mikháilovna and the children, and then run to the kitchen to tell the cook to prepare some special dish "for our visitor."

Uncle Seryózha never treated children affectionately; on the contrary he seemed to put up with us rather than to like us; but we always treated him with particular reverence, the result, as I can see now, partly of his aristocratic appearance, but chiefly of the fact that he called my father "Lyovótchka" and treated him just as my father treated us. He was not only not in the least afraid of him, but was always teasing him, and argued with him like an elder person with a younger. We were quite alive to this.

Of course every one knew that there were no faster dogs in the world than our black and white Darling and her daughter Winger. Not a hare could get away from them. But Uncle Seryózha said that the gray hares about us were sluggish creatures, not at all the same thing as steppe hares, and neither Darling nor Winger would get near a steppe hare. We lis-

tened with open mouths and did not know which to believe, papa or Uncle Seryózha.

Uncle Seryózha went out coursing with us one day. A number of gray hares were run down, not one got away; Uncle Seryózha expressed no surprise, but still maintained that the only reason was because they were a poor lot of hares.

We could not tell if he was right or wrong. Perhaps after all he was right, for he was more of a sportsman than papa and had run down ever so many wolves, while we had never known papa to run any wolves down. And afterwards papa only kept dogs because there was Agáfya Mikháilovna to be thought of, and Uncle Seryózha gave up sport because it was impossible to keep dogs. "Since the Emancipation of the peasants," he said, "sport is out of the question; there are no huntsmen to be had; peasants turn out with sticks and drive the sportsmen off the fields. What is there left to do nowadays? Country-life has become impossible."

. . . . . .

In the summer we sometimes went over, the whole family together, to pay Uncle Seryózha a visit.

It was a journey of twenty miles through open country to Pirogóvo. On the road we passed Yásenki and Kólpna. It was somewhere there, my mother told us, that papa defended a soldier before a Court-martial for insulting an officer. He was con-

demned and taken out at once and shot in the fields. It was horrible to think of. Perhaps it was in accordance with the law, but to us children it was incomprehensible.

Further on the road went by Ozerká, past the mysterious bottomless lake; then by way of Cows' Tails and Sorótchinka; and at last, near a solitary shrine in the open field, you turned to the left off the main road, and in the distance beyond the Upá appeared a handsome church and a park, and in the depths of it an interesting-looking two-winged stone house of peculiar architectural style.

As you drove up you became aware of a peculiar and unaccustomed shade of rigid squiredom pervading the place; not the sort we knew at Yásnaya, but a special Pirogóvo sort. You could already feel this atmosphere of squiredom as you drove through the village and the peasants stopped and bowed obsequiously; you could feel it in the eyes of the women and children who looked after you as you went by; in the kitchen-boy who saw the carriage from afar and rushed helter-skelter into the house to announce the arrival of visitors; and in the whole look of the demesne, with its newly clipped bushes and its well-brushed "sweep" sprinkled with fresh sand.

From the entrance-hall you went into the winter-garden, where lemon-trees grew in huge tubs; in the *zala* stood a big stuffed wolf, and behind the sofa, on

some kind of raised affair, lay a fox curled up, asleep, exactly as if it were alive.

We were welcomed by the charming and always affectionate Márya Mikháilovna and her daughters, Vera, of the same age as Tánya, and the two little ones, Várya (Barbara) and Masha.

When he heard the commotion Uncle Seryózha also came in from his room. He had a special room of his own off the *zala*. He slept in it and spent the whole day there over his accounts, reckoning up the in-comings of the property and writing up his account-books on a complicated system of book-keeping which nobody understood but himself. When you entered this room you had to do it quickly, shutting the door behind you as fast as you could, to prevent any flies from getting in. It was on account of the flies that the winter-frames were never taken out of the windows in this room and no one but Uncle Seryózha himself was allowed to put it to rights.[2]

Our host and hostess were always pleased to see their guests and welcomed us heartily; and Uncle Seryózha almost always began to tell "Lyovótchka" about the latest misfortunes that had happened on the estate.

"It 's all very well for a bird of heaven like you

[2] In this Sergéi Nikoláyevitch resembled Lévin's clever half-brother Sergéi Ivánovitch in "Anna Karénina," who called out to his visitor to shut the door quickly for fear of the flies and never opened his windows except at night.

PEASANT'S COTTAGE NEAR YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

A PUBLIC WELL NEAR YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

neither to sow nor to reap; you write a novel, buy up property in Samara and there you are! But you should try it here for a bit. I've had to give the new bailiff the sack; he had been robbing me all round. Vasili is managing again, so we have no coachman."

Papa would smile and turn the conversation to another topic; while we children felt that this was all quite as it ought to be, for Vasili, who had been Uncle Seryózha's coachman for many years, was rarely to be seen on the box, but was almost always replacing some dishonest bailiff or another.

It is wonderful how, in many traits of his character, Uncle Seryózha recalled old Prince Bolkónski in my father's "War and Peace."

There is no doubt that the type was not copied from him; for at the time when "War and Peace" was written, Uncle Seryózha was still a young man. I have talked the question over with his eldest daughter, Vera Sergéyevna, and we were both astonished at the prophetic clairvoyance of my father, who, in the relations of the Prince to his beloved daughter Princess Márya, had described the relations of Uncle Seryózha to Vera, down to the very smallest details. Just the same mathematical lessons, the same shy and tender affection, hidden under a mask of indifference and often of seeming cruelty, the same penetrating comprehension of her nature, and the same

indomitable "boyardly" aristocratic pride, separating himself and her by an impassable barrier from all the rest of the world. A clearer incarnation of the type of old Prince Bolkónski it is impossible to imagine.

Being an unusually frank and honest man, Uncle Seryózha never sought to conceal any feature of his character—except one: he concealed the tenderness of his affections with the utmost shyness, and if it ever forced itself into the light it was only in exceptional circumstances and then against his will.

He shared to a very marked degree in a family characteristic which showed itself in my father too, namely, an extraordinary restraint in the expression of affection, which was often concealed under the mask of indifference and sometimes even of unexpected harshness.

In the matter of wit and sarcasm, on the other hand, he was strikingly original. He spent several winters in succession with his family in Moscow. One day when he and his daughter had just been at a historic concert given by Anton Rubinstein, and came on to take tea with us in Weavers' Row,[3] my father asked him how he had liked the concert.

"Do you remember Himbut, Lyovótchka? Lieutenant Himbut, who was forester near Yásnaya? I once asked him what was the happiest moment of

[3] Khamóvniki, a street in Moscow.

his life. Do you know what he answered? 'When I was in the Cadet Corps,' he said, 'they used to take down my breeches now and again and lay me across a bench and flog me. When they stopped, that was the happiest moment of my life.' Well, it was only during the *entr'actes*, when Rubinstein stopped playing, that I really enjoyed myself."

He did n't always spare my father. Once when I was out shooting with a setter near Pirogóvo I drove in to Uncle Seryózha's to stop the night.

I do not remember the subject of our conversation, but Uncle Seryózha averred that "Lyovótchka" was proud.

"He is always preaching humility and non-resistance, but he is proud for all that. Máshenka's[4] sister had a footman called Forna. When he got drunk he used to get under the staircase, tuck up his legs and lie down. One day they came and told him that the Countess was calling him. 'She can come here and look for me if she wants me,' he answered. Lyovótchka is just the same. When Dolgorúki sent his chief secretary Istómin to ask him to come and have a talk with him about Syntáyef[5] the sectarian, do you know what he answered? 'Let him come here if he wants me.' Is n't that just like Forna? No, Lyovótchka is very proud; nothing would in-

[4] Máshenka, i. e. Márya Mikháilovna, his wife.
[5] See Chapter XVIII for this incident.

duce him to go; and he was quite right; but it 's no good talking of humility."

During the last years of Sergéi Nikoláyevitch's life my father was particularly friendly and affectionate with him and delighted in telling him all that he thought. He once lent him one of his books—I think it was "The Kingdom of God is within You"—and asked him to read it and tell him what he thought about it.

Uncle Seryózha read the whole book through conscientiously and, when he returned it, said: "Do you remember, Lyovótchka, how we used to travel post? On some autumn day, when the mud was frozen into hummocks, you would be sitting in a *tarantás*[6] with unyielding frame-poles;[7] you 'd be bumped in the back, and bumped in the sides; the seat would jump out from under you; you would begin to feel as if you could n't stand any more of it, when suddenly out you 'd bowl onto the smooth highroad, and step into a beautiful Viennese calash drawn by four splendid horses. Well, when I was reading your book, there was only one place where I felt I had got into the calash. That was a passage from Hertzen, just a page, which you quote. All the rest,

[6] Tarantás, a springless cart for cross-country traveling, where the roads are too rough for springs. It resembles a small boat on a small dray.

[7] Drozhina, the central pole connecting the fore and after axle-trees.

all your own stuff, was just jolting in the *tarantás*."

When he said things like that, Uncle Seryózha of course knew that my father would not be offended but would laugh heartily with him. It would have been difficult to arrive at a more unexpected conclusion: and of course, no one but Uncle Seryózha would have ventured to say such a thing to my father.

Uncle Seryózha told us that he once traveled with a lady, a complete stranger, who belonged to the order of button-holing railway bores. Discovering that she was in the same carriage with Count Tolstoy, brother of the famous writer, she began bothering him with questions about what Lyof Nikoláyevitch was writing now, and whether Sergéi Nikoláyevitch also wrote.

"I have n't a notion what my brother may be writing, madam; and as for myself, I never write anything but telegrams," answered Uncle Seryózha curtly, wishing to shut her up.

"What a pity! How often it happens like that in life! One brother has all the gifts, and another none," replied the lady sympathetically, and relapsed into silence.

The question put to Sergéi Nikoláyevitch by the lady in the railway carriage as to whether he also wrote, must occur very forcibly to all who knew this

clever and original man intimately. As a matter of fact, if he had written he would have gone far. He had plenty of matter for writing.

Sitting year after year in his room, he spent his time in thinking and in living his own internal life. He would often begin to groan suddenly for no apparent reason and cry, "Ay, ay, ay . . . ay, ay . . . ay!" His family could hear these groans many rooms away, and knew that it was "all right"; an idea had struck him, that was all.

It was only very, very rarely, when some one near and dear to him arrived, that he let himself go, and in animated and imaginative monologue developed his ideas and observations, which were always original, exact, and well-digested. Uncle Seryózha thought only for his own sake, and, like the self-confident egoist that my father describes him as in the fragment of his reminiscences that I have cited above, never felt any necessity for sharing his intellectual adventures with others. And that was his great misfortune. He was deprived of that feeling of satisfaction which the writer experiences when he pours out the superfluity of his ego on paper, and for want of this safety-valve he overloaded himself and became an intellectual Stylites.

A. A. Fet in his "Reminiscences" describes the character of the three Tolstoy brothers with extraordinary perspicacity:

I am convinced that the fundamental type of all the three Tolstoy brothers was identical, just as the type of all maple-leaves is identical, in spite of the variety of their configuration. And if I set myself to develop the idea, I could show to what a degree all three brothers shared in that passionate enthusiasm, without which it would have been impossible for one of them to turn into the creative artist Lyof Tolstoy. The difference of their attitude to life was determined by the difference of the ways in which they turned their back on their unfulfilled dreams. Nikolái quenched his ardor in skeptical derision; Lyof renounced his unrealized dreams with silent reproach; and Sergéi, with morbid misanthropy. The greater the original store of love in such characters, the stronger, if only for a time, is their resemblance to "Timon of Athens." ("My Reminiscences," 1848–89, by A. Fet. Part I, p. 296 of the Russian edition.)

In the winter of 1901-1902 my father was ill in the Crimea, and for a long time lay between life and death. Uncle Seryózha, who felt himself getting weaker, could not bring himself to leave Pirogóvo, and anxiously followed the progress of my father's illness from his own home by means of the letters which several members of our family wrote to him, and by the bulletins in the newspapers.

When my father began to recover, I returned home, and on the way from the Crimea went to Pirogóvo, in order to tell Uncle Seryózha personally about his illness and his actual condition. I remember how joyfully and gratefully he welcomed me.

"How glad I am that you came! Now tell me all about it. Who is with him? All of them? And who nurses him most? Do you go on duty in turn? And at night too? He can't get out of bed. Ah, that 's the worst of all! It will be my turn to die soon; a year sooner or later, what does it matter? But to lie helpless, a burden to every one, to have others to do everything for you, to lift you and help you to sit up—that 's what 's so awful! . . . And how does he endure it? Got used to it, you say? No. I cannot imagine having Vera to change my linen and wash me. Of course she would say that it 's nothing to her; but for me it would be awful. And tell me, is he afraid to die? Does he say No? Very likely: he 's a strong man, he may be able to conquer the fear of it; yes, yes . . . perhaps he 's not afraid; but still . . . You say he struggles with the feeling? . . . Why, of course, what else can one do? I wanted to go and be with him; but I thought, how can I? I shall crock up myself, and then there will be two invalids instead of one. Yes, you have told me a great deal; every detail is interesting. It is not death that 's so terrible, it 's illness, helplessness, and above all, the fear that you are a burden to others. That 's awful, awful!"

Uncle Seryózha died in 1904 of cancer in the face. This is what my aunt, María Nikoláyevna,[8] the nun,

[8] Tolstoy's sister. See Chap. XXV.

told me about his death. Almost to the last day he was on his legs, and would not let any one nurse him. He was in full possession of his faculties and consciously prepared for death.

Besides his own family, the aged María Mikháilovna and her daughters, his sister, María Nikoláyevna, who told me the story, was with him too, and from hour to hour they expected the arrival of my father for whom they had sent a messenger to Yásnaya. They were all troubled with the difficult question whether the dying man would want to receive the Holy Communion before he died. Knowing Sergéi Nikoláyevitch's disbelief in the religion of the Church, no one dared to mention the subject to him and the unhappy María Mikháilovna hovered round his room wringing her hands and praying. They awaited my father's arrival impatiently, but were secretly afraid of his influence over his brother, and hoped against hope that Sergéi Nikoláyevitch would send for the priest before his arrival.

"Imagine our surprise and delight," said María Tolstoy, "when Lyovótchka came out of his room and told María Mikháilovna that Seryózha wanted a priest sent for. I do not know what they had been talking about, but when Seryózha said that he wished to take the Communion Lyovótchka answered that he was quite right and at once came and told us what he wanted."

My father stayed about a week at Pirogóvo and left two days before my uncle died. When he received a telegram to say he was worse he drove over again, but arrived too late; he was no longer living. He carried his body out from the house with his own hands, and bore it himself to the churchyard. When he got back to Yásnaya he spoke with touching affection of his parting with this "inscrutable and beloved" brother, who was so strange and so remote from him but at the same time so near and so akin.

TOLSTOY AND DR. D. L. NIKITIN IN THE CRIMEA

CHAPTER XIII

FET, STRAKHOF, GAY.

"WHAT 'S this saber doing here?" asked a young guardsman, Lieutenant Afanásyi Afanásyevitch Fet, of the footman one day as he entered the hall of Iván Sergéyevitch Turgényef's flat in St. Petersburg in the middle of the fifties.

"It is Count Tolstoy's saber; he is asleep in the drawing-room. And Iván Sergéyevitch is in his study having breakfast," replied Zakhár.

"During the hour I spent with Turgényef," says Fet in his Reminiscences, "we talked in low voices for fear of waking the Count who was asleep the other side of the door.

" 'He 's like that all the time,' " said Turgényef smiling; " 'Ever since he got back from his battery at Sebastopol,[1] and came to stay here, he has been going the pace. Orgies, Gipsies, and gambling all night long; and then he sleeps like a dead man till two o'clock in the afternoon. I did my best to stop him, but have given it up as a bad job.'

[1] Tolstoy was in the artillery, and commanded a battery in the Crimea.

" 'It was in this visit to St. Petersburg that I and Tolstoy became acquainted, but the acquaintance was of a purely formal character, as I had not yet seen a line of his writings, and had never heard of his name in literature, except that Turgényef mentioned his "Stories of Childhood." ' " [2]

Soon after this my father came to know Fet pretty intimately; they struck up a firm and lasting friendship and established a correspondence which lasted almost till Fet's death. It was only during the last year of Fet's life, when my father was entirely absorbed in his new ideas, which were at variance with Afanásyi Afanásyevitch's whole philosophy of life, that they became at all estranged and met more rarely.

From the very first stages of their acquaintance their paths were parallel. They got to know each other when they were both young officers and beginners in literature. Then they both married—Fet considerably before my father—and both settled in the country.

Fet lived at his farm, Stepánovka, in Mtsénski District,[3] not far from Turgényef's property, Spásskoye-Lutovínovo, and at one time Turgényef and my father, and his elder brother Nikolái, all used to meet at Fet's. They went out shooting black-cock and

[2] Tolstoy's "Childhood, Boyhood, Early Manhood" was published in 1856.

[3] In the province of Oryól.

often migrated from there to Spásskoye and from Spásskoye to my uncle's at Nikolsko-Vyázemskoye. It was at Fet's, at Stepánovka, that my father and Turgényef quarreled.

Before the railway was made, when people still had to drive, Fet always used to turn in at Yásnaya Polyána to see my father on his way into Moscow, and these visits became an established custom. Afterwards, when the railway was constructed and my father was married, Afanásyi Afanásyevitch always broke his journey to come and see us as he passed, and if he omitted to do so, my father used to write him a letter of earnest reproaches and he used to apologize as if he had been guilty of some fault.

In those distant times of which I am speaking my father was bound to Fet by a common interest in agriculture as well as literature. Some of my father's letters of the sixties are curious in this respect. For instance, in 1860, he writes a long dissertation on Turgényef's novel "On the Eve" which had just come out, and at the end adds a postscript: "What is the price of a set of the best quality of veterinary instruments? Also of a set of lancets and bleeding-cups for human use?" In another letter there is a postscript: "When you are next in Oryol buy me six hundredweight of various ropes, reins, and traces," and, on the same page: "The passage, 'Tender art thou,' and the whole thing,

is charming. You have never done anything better; it is all charming." The quotation is from Fet's poem, "The lingering clouds' last throng flies over us."

But it was not only community of interests that brought my father and Afanásyi Afanásyevitch together. The reason of their intimacy lay in the fact that, as my father expressed it, they "thought alike with their heart's mind."

"Suddenly, from various imperceptible data, it became clear to me how deeply your nature was allied to mine," writes my father to Fet in 1876; and in the autumn of the same year he writes: "It is extraordinary how closely we are allied in mind and heart."

My father said of Fet that his chief merit was that he thought quite independently, in his own ideas and images, instead of borrowing ideas and images from other people; and he counted him, together with Tyútchef,[4] among our best poets.

Often, when Fet was dead, my father would recall some of his poems and, singling me out for some reason, would say: "Ilyúsha, repeat those lines 'I thought' . . . I can't remember what he thought; or 'The world 's asleep.' You must know them"; and he used to listen with delight while I repeated

[4] A poet of an older generation; a friend of Heine; regarded as the chief Russian poet of his day in 1854 by Turgényef who preferred his "pure lyricalness" to the "captivating but rather monotonous grace of Fet."

them, prompting me in his favorite passages, with tears sometimes rising to his eyes.

. . . . . .

I can remember Fet's visits from my earliest childhood. He almost always brought his wife, Márya Petróvna, with him, and often stayed several days.

He had a long black beard, turning gray, a clearly marked Jewish type of face and little feminine hands with remarkably long, well-cared-for nails. He spoke in a deep bass voice and broke repeatedly into a long-drawn cough, that rattled like small shot. Then he would stop and rest, with his head bent down, and a long Hm! . . . hm-m-m! . . . stroke his beard awhile and then go on talking.

Sometimes he was extremely witty and entertained the whole house with his jokes. His jokes were all the better because when they came they were always quite unexpected even by himself. I think it was Fet who was responsible for our footman Yegór's discomfiture. While Yegór was handing round the blancmange, dressed up for "company" in a red waistcoat, one of the visitor's jokes was too much for him and he burst out laughing so lustily that he had to put the dish down on the floor and run out of the room, to the general delight of the whole company.

My sister Tánya used to give a capital imitation of Fet reciting his own poetry:

"Here is the portrait, li-i-ike and yet unli-i-ike,

hm . . . hm . . . Wherein the li-i-ikeness and the unli-i-ikeness li-i-ie, hm . . . hm . . . hm . . . hm-m-m-m."

In early childhood one is not much interested in poetry. Poetry, one imagines, was invented only for us to have to learn it by heart. I got so sick of Pushkin's "The children ran into the hut" [5] and Lérmontof's "Angel" [6] which I was made to learn, that I never relished poetry for a long time afterwards and sulked over every poem as if it were a punishment. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that I quite disliked Fet as a child and supposed that he and papa were friends only because he was "rather an ass." It was only in much later years that I came to understand him and to love him as a poet, as he deserves to be loved and understood.

. . . . . .

I also remember Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Strakhof's visits. He was a remarkably quiet and modest man. He appeared at Yásnaya Polyána in the beginning of the seventies and from that time forth came and stayed with us almost every summer till he died.

He had big, gray eyes, which he always kept wide

[5] The first line of Pushkin's poem "The Drowned Man."

[6] English readers may know this as a song of Rubinstein's, a duet for female voices.

open, as if in astonishment; a long beard with a touch of gray in it; and when he spoke, at the end of every sentence he gave a shy laugh: Ha, ha, ha! When he addressed papa he always said "Léf Nikoláyevitch" instead of "Lyof Nikoláyevitch" like other people, pronouncing the e thin.[7]

He always slept downstairs in my father's study, and spent his whole day there reading or writing, with a thick cigarette, which he rolled himself, in his mouth.

An hour before dinner, when the *katkí* or outside-car, drawn by two horses, was brought round to the front door and we all assembled to drive to the bathing-place, Nikolái Nikoláyevitch used to come out of his room in a soft gray hat, with a towel and walking-stick, and drive with us. Every one without exception, grown-ups and children alike, was fond of him, and I cannot imagine his ever having been disagreeable to any one.

He used to repeat a humorous poem beginning "Fades the leaf" by Kozmá Prutkóf[8] in the most

[7] The Russian vowel sound *yo* always represents an etymological *e*, as *vyoz*, he carried (in a cart) from *vezti*, to carry. The name Lyof, Leon, is generally distinguished from its congener, *lef*, a lion, by this thickening of the vowel.

[8] Kozmá Prutkóf was the pseudonym under which three poets, including the other Tolstoy, Count Alexéy, published some comic and satirical verses in the fifties. The point of this one was that in the autumn Junker Schmidt was gloomy and wanted to shoot himself, but after thinking it over repented in the Spring!

delightful manner, and we children used to go on plaguing him with demands for it, until he broke out laughing and recited the whole thing from beginning to end.

> "Oh, Junker Schmidt, believe me truly
> Summer will come back,"

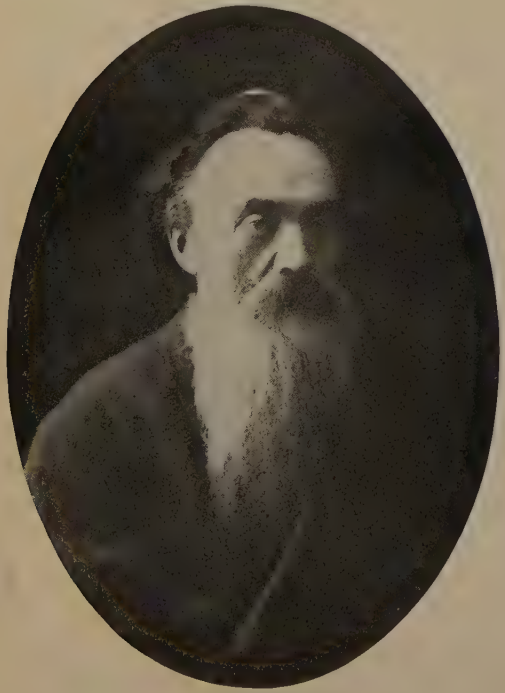
he used to wind up emphatically, and never failed to grin and say "Ha, ha, ha!" at the last word.

I was particularly fond of him because he gave me a wonderful illustrated butterfly-book and taught me how to dry specimens for my collection.

Strakhof and my father came together originally on a purely business footing. When the first part of my father's Alphabet and Reading Book was printed Strakhof had charge of the proof-reading. This led to a correspondence between them of a business character at first, later developing into a philosophical and friendly one.

While he was writing "Anna Karénina," my father set great store by his opinion and valued his critical instinct very highly. "It is enough for me that that is your opinion," he writes in a letter of 1872, probably apropos of the Alphabet.

In 1876, apropos of "Anna Karénina" this time, my father writes: "You ask me whether you have understood my novel aright, and what I think of your opinion. Of course you understood it aright. Of course I am overjoyed at your understanding of



NIKOLÁI NIKOLÁYEVITCH STRAKHOF

SERGÉI SEMYÓNOVITCH URÚSOF

it; but it does not follow that everybody will understand it as you do."

But it was not only his critical work that drew my father to Strakhof.[9] My father disliked critics as a rule and used to say that the only people who took to criticism were those who had no creative faculty of their own. "The stupid ones judge the clever ones," he said of professional critics. What he valued most in Strakhof was the profound and penetrating thinker. Even in general conversation, whenever my father put him any scientific question —Strakhof was a scientist by education—I remember the extraordinary exactness and clearness of his answers. It was like a lesson by a good teacher.

"Do you know the thing that most struck me about you?" writes my father in one of his letters. "It was the expression of your face when you once came in from the garden by the balcony door, not knowing that I was in the study. This expression, remote, concentrated and severe, explained you to me, of course with the help of all that you had written and said. I am convinced that you are predestined for a purely philosophical career. . . . You have one quality which I never met in any other Russian; that is, besides having clearness and brevity in expression, you have softness combined with

[9] Strakhof was a literary critic by profession and achieved a considerable celebrity.

strength; you do not tear a thing with your teeth, but with soft strong paws."

Strakhof was a "real friend" of my father's—my father described him so himself—and I recall his memory with deep affection and respect.

. . . . . .

At last I have come to the memory of the man who was nearer in spirit to my father than any other human being, namely Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Gay.

Grandfather Gay, as we used to call him, made my father's acquaintance in 1882. While living on his farm in the Province of Tchernígof, he chanced to read my father's pamphlet "On the Census," and finding a solution in it of the very questions which were troubling him too at the time, he started out without delay and hurried into Moscow.

I remember his first arrival, and I have always retained the impression that from the very first words they exchanged he and my father understood each other and found themselves speaking the same language.

Just like my father, Gay was at this time passing through a great spiritual crisis; and, traveling almost the same road as my father in his search after truth, he had arrived at the study of the Gospel and a new understanding of it.

"For the personality of Christ," writes my sister Tatyána, in her article on him called "Friends and

Visitors at Yásnaya Polyána," [10] "he entertained a passionate and tender affection, as if for a near and familiar friend whom he loved with all the strength of his soul." Often, during heated arguments, Nikólai Nikoláyevitch would take from his pocket the Gospel, which he always carried about with him and read out some passage from it appropriate to the subject in hand. "This book contains everything that a man needs," he used to say on these occasions. While reading the Gospel he often looked up at the person he was talking to and went on reading without looking down at the book again. His face glowed at such moments with so much inward joy, that one could see how near and dear the words he was reading were to his heart. He knew the whole Gospel almost by heart, but he said that every time he read it he enjoyed a new and genuine spiritual delight. He said that not only was everything intelligible to him in the Gospel, but that when he read it he seemed to be reading in his own soul and felt himself capable of rising higher and higher towards God and merging himself in Him.

When he came to Weavers' Row, Nikólai Nikoláyevitch offered my father to paint a portrait of my sister Tánya. "In return for all the good you have done me," he said. My father asked him to paint my mother instead, and the next day Gay brought

[10] *Vyestnik Evrópy*, November, 1904.—I. T.

paints and canvas and set to work. I do not remember how long he was over it, but in the end, in spite of the innumerable remarks which were volunteered on every hand by the spectators interested in his work, all of which Gay listened to attentively and took into consideration, or perhaps *because of* those observations, the portrait was a failure, and Nikólai Nikoláyevitch destroyed it with his own hands.

As a scrupulous artist he would not content himself with a merely external resemblance, and when he had painted "a lady in a velvet dress, with four thousand pounds in her pocket" he was disgusted with the result, and resolved to do the whole thing afresh. It was not till some years afterwards, when he knew my mother better and loved her that he painted the portrait of her, three-quarter length, with my three-year-old sister Sasha in her arms.

"Grandfather" often came and stayed with us both in Moscow and at Yásnaya and from the moment of first acquaintance he became quite one of the family. When he painted my father's portrait in his study in Moscow, my father got so used to his presence, that he paid no attention to him whatever and worked as if he were not in the room. It was in this study that "Grandfather" slept.

He had an extraordinarily charming and intellectual face. His long gray curls, hanging all round his bald head, and his wide-open intelligent eyes,

gave him a sort of biblical, prophetic look. When he got excited in conversation—and he always got excited whenever Gospel doctrine or Art was touched on—with his shining eyes and large energetic gestures, he gave the impression of a missionary preacher, and it is odd that even when I was sixteen or seventeen years old and religious questions had no interest for me, I loved to listen to "Grandfather's" sermons and was never bored by them. One may infer therefore that they gave the impression of great sincerity and love.

Under my father's influence Nikólai Nikoláyevitch took once more to artistic work, which he had hitherto given up for some time,[11] and his last productions "Christ before Pilate," "What is Truth?" [12] "The Crucifixion" and others are the fruit of his new understanding and interpretation of Gospel subjects, greatly inspired in him by my father. Before beginning a picture, Gay used to nurse it in his head for a long time, and always imparted his intentions in conversation or by letter to my father, who was keenly interested in his ideas and sincerely delighted

[11] When he made Tolstoy's acquaintance he had some political post in Little Russia.

[12] Gay's "What is Truth?" is reproduced in Mr. Aylmer Maude's excellent book, "The Life of Tolstoy" (from which many of the notes in this translation are drawn), together with the portrait of Tolstoy painted in his study at Moscow, and portraits of the daughters, Tánya and "Little" Masha. Gay also carved a bust of Tolstoy, and illustrated "What Men Live By."

in his penetrating discernment and masterly technique.

Nikólai Nikoláyevitch's friendship was very dear to my father. He was the first man who wholeheartedly shared his convictions and loved him without reserve. Having set out in search of truth and serving it, as they did, with all their might, they found support in one another and told one another of their kindred experiences. Just as my father carefully followed Gay's artistic work, so Gay never let a word that my father wrote escape him; he copied out his manuscripts himself and begged us all to send him everything new that he produced. They both gave up smoking and became vegetarians at the same time.

They agreed also in their love of manual labor and in the realization of the necessity for it.

It appeared that Gay was very good at building stoves [13] and that he did all the stove-building at home on his farm for his own people and for the peasants in the village. When my father heard this, he asked him to make a stove for a widow at Yásnaya, for whom he had just built a clay house.[14] "Grandfather" put on his apron, and set about it at once. He was master-builder and my father was his "mate."

[13] The large brick stoves, that is, which stand out from the wall in Russian houses.

[14] Of soft clay held together by straw.

Nikólai Nikoláyevitch died in 1904.

When the telegram arrived at Yásnaya announcing his death, my sisters Tatyána and Masha were so overwhelmed by the news that they could not bring themselves to tell my father. My mother had to undertake the painful duty of showing him the telegram herself.

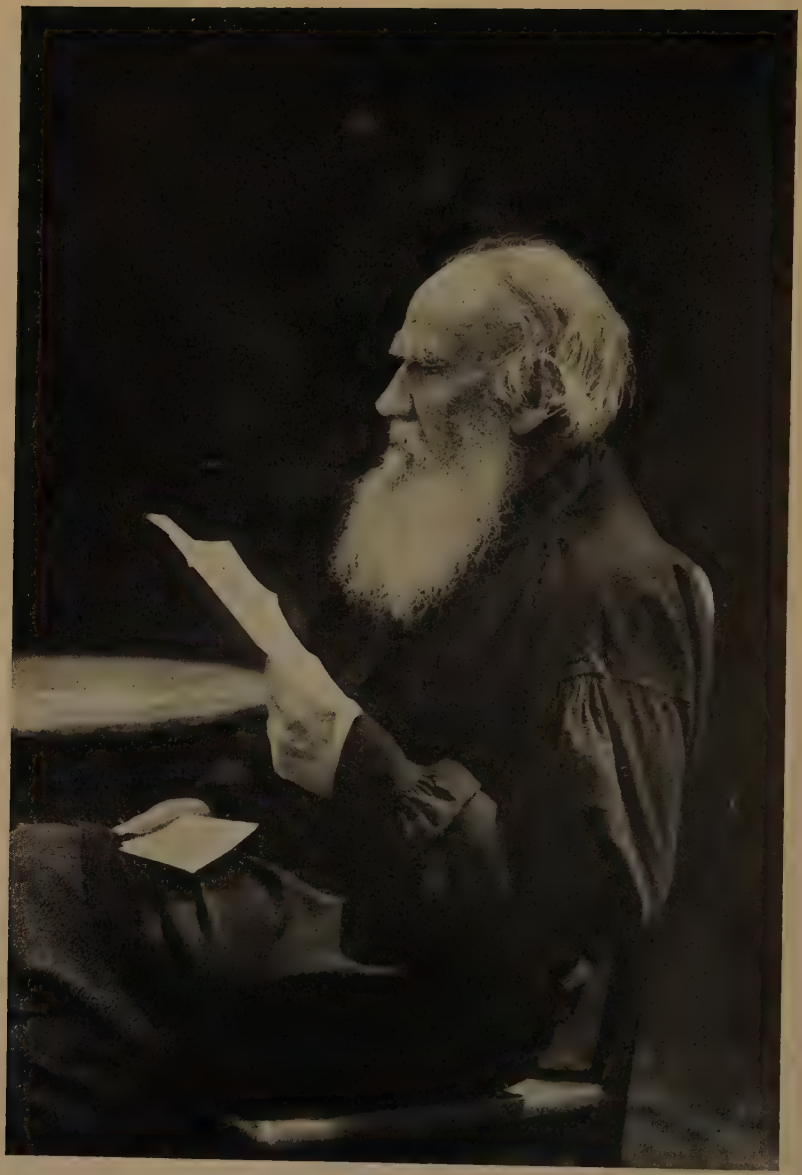
CHAPTER XIV

TURGÉNYEF

I DO not mean to recount all the misunderstandings which existed between my father and Turgényef, and which ended in a downright quarrel in 1861. The actual external facts of that story are common property and there is no need to repeat them.[1] According to general opinion, "the quarrel between the two greatest writers of the day" arose out of their literary rivalry. It is my intention to show cause against this generally received opinion, and before I come to Turgényef's visits to Yásnaya Polyána, I want to make as clear as I can the real reason of the perpetual discords between these two good-hearted people, who had a cordial affection for each other, discords which led in the end to an out-and-out quarrel and the exchange of mutual defiance.

As far as I know, my father never had any serious difference with any human being during the whole course of his existence, except Turgényef. And

[1] Fet, at whose house the quarrel took place, tells all about it in his Memoirs (See Aylmer Maude's "Life"). Tolstoy dogmatized about ladylike charity, apropos of Turgényef's daughter. Turgényef, in a fit of nerves, threatened to box his ears. Tolstoy challenged him to a duel, and Turgényef apologized.



THE DAY'S MAIL

Turgényef, in a letter to my father in 1865, writes: "You are the only man with whom I have ever had misunderstandings." Whenever my father related his quarrel with Iván Sergéyevitch he took all the blame for it on himself. Turgényef, immediately after the quarrel, wrote a letter apologizing to my father and never sought to justify his own part in it.

Why was it that, as Turgényef himself put it, his "constellation" and my father's "moved in the ether with unquestioned enmity"?

This is what my sister Tatyána wrote on the subject in her article "Turgényef," published in the Supplement to the *Nóvoye Vrémya*, February 2, 1908:

> All question of literary rivalry, it seems to me, is utterly beside the mark. Turgényef, from the very outset of my father's literary career, acknowledged his wonderful talents, and never dreamed of rivalry with him. From the moment when, so early as 1854, he wrote to Kolbasín, "If Heaven only grant Tolstoy life, I confidently hope that he will surprise us all," he never ceased to follow my father's work with interest and always expressed his unbounded admiration of it.

"When this young wine has done fermenting," he writes to Druzhínin [2] in 1856, "the result will be a liquor worthy of the gods."

[2] Druzhínin, a well known critic of the fifties.

In 1857 he writes to Polónski:[3] "This man will go far, and leave deep traces behind him."

Nevertheless, somehow these two men never could "hit it off" together. When one reads Turgényef's letters to my father, one sees that from the very beginning of their acquaintance misunderstandings were always arising, which they continually endeavored to smooth down or to forget, but which arose again after a time—sometimes in another form—necessitating new explanations and reconciliations.

In 1865 Turgényef writes to my father:

Your letter took some time reaching me, dear Lyof Nikoláyevitch. Let me begin by saying that I am very grateful to you for sending it to me. I shall never cease to love you and to value your friendship, although, probably through my fault, each of us will long feel considerable awkwardness in the presence of the other. . . . I think that you yourself understand the reason of this awkwardness of which I speak. You are the only man with whom I have ever had misunderstandings. They have arisen, perversely enough, from my unwillingness to confine myself to merely friendly relations with you. I have always wanted to go further and deeper than that; but I set about it clumsily; I irritated and upset you, and when I saw my mistake, I drew back, too hastily perhaps; and that was the cause of this "gulf" between us.

But this awkwardness is a mere physical sensation, nothing more; and if when we meet again you see the old "mischievous look in my eyes," believe me, the reason of it will

[3] Polónski, the poet. See Chapter XIX, p. 223.

not be that I am a bad man. I assure you that there is no need to look for any other explanation. Perhaps I may add also, that I am much older than you, and have traveled a different road. . . . Outside of our special, so-called "literary" interests, I am convinced, we have few points of contact. Your whole being stretches out its hands towards the future; mine is built upon the past. For me to follow you is impossible. For you to follow me is equally out of the question. You are too far removed from me, and besides, you stand too firmly on your own legs to become any man's disciple. I can assure you that I never attributed any malice to you, never suspected you of any literary envy. I have often thought, if you will excuse the expression, that you were wanting in common sense, but never in goodness. You are too penetrating not to know, that if either of us has cause to envy the other, it is certainly not you that have cause to envy me. . . .

The following year Turgényef wrote a letter to my father which, it seems to me, provides the key to the understanding of his attitude towards him.

You write that you are very glad you did not follow my advice and become a pure man of letters. I don't deny it; perhaps you are right; still, batter my poor brains as I may, I cannot imagine what else you are if you are not a man of letters: a soldier? a squire? a philosopher? the founder of a new religious sect? a civil servant? a man of business? . . . Please help me out of my difficulties and tell me which of these suppositions is correct. I am joking, but I really do wish beyond all things to see you under weigh at last with all sails set. . . .

It seems to me that Turgényef, as an artist, saw nothing in my father beyond his great literary talent, and was unwilling to allow him the right to be anything besides an artist and a writer. Any other line of activity on his part offended Turgényef, as it were, and he was angry with my father because he did not follow his advice. He was much older than my father,[4] he did not hesitate to rank his own talent lower than my father's, and demanded only one thing of him, that he should devote all the energies of his life to his literary work. And lo and behold, my father would have nothing to do with his magnanimity and humility, he would not listen to his advice, but insisted on going the road which his own tastes and nature pointed out to him. Turgényef's tastes and character were diametrically opposed to my father's. While opposition always inspired my father and lent him strength, it had just the opposite effect on Turgényef.

Being wholly in agreement with my sister's views, I will merely supplement them with the words uttered by my father's brother Nikólai Nikoláyevitch, who said: "Turgényef cannot reconcile himself to the idea that Lyovótchka is growing up and freeing himself from his tutelage."

As a matter of fact, when Turgényef was already

[4] Turgényef was ten years older than Tolstoy.

a famous writer no one had ever heard of Tolstoy, and, as Fet expressed it, there was only "some mention of his stories of childhood."

I can imagine with what secret veneration a young writer, just beginning, like my father, must have regarded Turgényef at that time. All the more, because Iván Sergéyevitch was a great friend of his beloved eldest brother, Nikolái.

I do not like to assert it positively, but it seems to me, that just as Turgényef was unwilling to confine himself to "merely friendly relations," so my father also felt too warmly towards Iván Sergéyevitch, and that was the very reason why they could never meet without disagreeing and quarreling. In confirmation of what I say here is a passage from a letter written by V. Bótkin, a close friend of my father's and of Iván Sergéyevitch's, to A. A. Fet, immediately after the quarrel.

> I think that Tolstoy really has a passionately affectionate nature and he would like to love Turgényef warmly, but unfortunately his impulsive feeling encounters nothing but a kindly, good-natured indifference, and he can by no means reconcile himself to that.

Turgényef himself said that when they first came to know each other my father dogged his heels "like a woman in love," and at one time he used to avoid him, because he was afraid of his spirit of opposition.

My father was perhaps irritated by the slightly patronizing tone which Turgényef adopted from the very outset of their acquaintance; and Turgényef was irritated by my father's "crankiness," which distracted him from "his proper *métier*, literature."

In 1860, before the date of the quarrel, Turgényef writes to Fet: "Lyof Tolstoy continues to play the crank. It was evidently written in his stars. When will he turn his final somersault and stand on his feet at last?" Turgényef felt just the same about my father's "Confession," which he read not long before his death. Having promised to read it, "to try to understand it" and "not to lose my temper," he "started to write a long letter in answer to the 'Confession,' but never finished it . . . for fear of becoming contentious." In a letter to D. V. Grigoróvitch he called the book, which was based, in his opinion, on false premises, "a denial of all live human life" and "a new sort of Nihilism." [5]

It is evident that even then Turgényef did not understand what a mastery my father's new philosophy of life had obtained over him, and he was inclined to attribute this enthusiasm along with the rest to the same continual "crankinesses" and "somersaults," to which he had formerly attributed his interest in

[5] "A Nihilist is a man who does not bow to any kind of authority, who does not accept any principle on trust, with however much reverence that principle may be invested."—Turgényef's "Fathers and Sons."

school-mastering, agriculture, the publication of a paper [6] and so forth.

. . . . . .

Iván Sergéyevitch visited Yásnaya Polyána, within my memory, three times, namely in August and September in 1878, and the third and last time at the beginning of May in 1880. I can remember all these visits, although it is quite possible that some details have escaped me.

I remember that when we expected Turgényef on his first visit, it was a great event and the most anxious and excited of all the household was my mother. She told us that my father had quarreled with Turgényef and had once challenged him to a duel; and that he was now coming at my father's invitation to effect a reconciliation.

Turgényef spent all the time sitting with my father, who during his visit even put aside his work, and once, in the middle of the day, my mother collected us all, at a quite unusual hour, in the drawing-room, where Iván Sergéyevitch read us his story of "The Dog." I can remember his tall stalwart figure, his gray, silky, yellowish hair, his soft tread and

[6] Namely the *Yásnaya Polyána,* published from Tolstoy's own house, on education, in 1861 and 1862. Tolstoy had opened several schools in the neighborhood by that time, and the teachers in them contributed to the paper. Tolstoy's own contributions are to be found in the collections of his works, and in separate editions, under the heading of "On Popular Education," etc.

rather waddling walk, and his piping voice, quite out of keeping with his majestic exterior. He had a chuckling kind of laugh, like a child's, and when he laughed his voice was more piping than ever.

In the evening, after dinner, we all gathered in the *zala*. At that time Uncle Seryózha, my father's brother, Prince Leoníd Dmítryevitch Urúsof, Vice-Governor of the Province of Tula, Uncle Sasha Behrs and his young wife, the handsome Georgian Patty, and the whole family of the Kuzmínskis, were staying at Yásnaya.

Aunt Tánya was asked to sing. We listened with beating hearts and waited to hear what Turgényef, the famous connoisseur, would say about her singing. Of course he praised it,—sincerely, I think.

After the singing a quadrille was got up. All of a sudden, in the middle of the quadrille, Iván Sergéyevitch, who was sitting at one side looking on, got up and took one of the ladies by the hand; and, putting his thumbs into the arm-holes of his waistcoat, danced a *cancan* according to the latest rules of Parisian art. Every one roared with laughter, Turgényef more than anybody.[7]

After tea the "grown-ups" started some conversation, and a warm dispute arose among them. It was Prince Urúsof who disputed most warmly, and "went

[7] Mr. Maude quotes Tolstoy's diary, which relates the incident laconically: "Turgényef, *cancan:* it is sad."

TOLSTOY AND HIS GRANDSON

for" Turgényef. This was the time when my father's "spiritual birth," as he himself called the period, was just beginning; and Prince Urúsof was one of his first sincere partizans and friends. I do not remember what Prince Urúsof was arguing about; but he was sitting at the table opposite Iván Sergéyevitch, making sweeping gestures with his arm, when suddenly an extraordinary thing happened: his chair slipped away from under him and he fell on the floor in the very attitude in which he had just been sitting on his chair, with his arm stretched out and his forefinger raised menacingly in the air.[8]

Quite undisturbed by the accident, he sat calmly where he was, still gesticulating, and finished the sentence he had begun.

Turgényef looked him up and down and burst out laughing.

"*Il m'assomme*, this Trubetskóy," he piped through his laughter, calling the Prince by the wrong name. Urúsof was on the point of taking offense, but when he saw that everybody else was laughing too, he got up and joined in the general hilarity.

One evening we sat in the small drawing-room at the round table. It was a splendid summer night. Somebody, I think it was my mother, proposed that every one present should describe the happiest moment of his life.

[8] This is the gigantic Warrior described in Chap. V.

"You begin, Iván Sergéyevitch," she said, turning to Turgényef.

"The happiest moment of my life was when I first read in the eyes of the woman I loved that she loved me in return," said Iván Sergéyevitch and relapsed into thought.

"It 's your turn now, Sergéi Nikoláyevitch," said Aunt Tánya, turning to Uncle Seryózha.

"I 'll tell you; but I must whisper it in your ear," answered Uncle Seryózha, smiling his clever sarcastic smile. "The happiest moment of my life" . . .

He finished the rest in a whisper, right into Tatyána Andréyevna's ear, and I did not hear what he said. I only saw how Aunt Tánya drew back from him and laughed.

"Ay, ay, ay! You 're always saying things like that, Sergéi Nikoláyevitch. You 're an impossible man!"

"What did Sergéi Nikoláyevitch say?" asked my mother, who never understood a joke.

"I 'll tell you afterwards."

And that ended the game.

On Turgényef's second visit, I remember the woodcock shooting. This was on the 2d or 3d of May, 1880. We all went out together beyond the Vorónka, my father, my mother and all the children. My father gave Turgényef the best place and posted himself a hundred and fifty paces away at the other

end of the same glade. My mother stood by Turgényef, and we children lit a bonfire not far off. My father fired several shots and brought down two birds; Iván Sergéyevitch had no luck and was envying my father's good fortune all the time. At last, when it was beginning to get dark, a woodcock flew over Turgényef, and he shot it.

"Killed it?" called out my father from his place.

"Fell like a stone; send your dog to pick him up," answered Iván Sergéyevitch.

My father sent us with the dog, Turgényef showed us where to look for the bird; but search as we might, and the dog too, there was no woodcock to be found. At last Turgényef came to help us, my father joined in the search; but still there was no woodcock to be found.

"Perhaps you only winged it; it may have got away along the ground," said my father, puzzled. "It is impossible that the dog should n't find it; he could n't miss a bird that was killed."

"I tell you I saw it with my own eyes, Lyof Nikoláyevitch; it fell like a stone; I did n't wound it, I killed it outright; I can tell the difference."

"Then why can't the dog find it? It 's impossible; there 's something wrong."

"I don't know anything about that," insisted Turgényef: "you may take it from me I 'm not lying; it fell like a stone I tell you."

There was no finding the woodcock, and the incident left an uncomfortable atmosphere behind it, as if one or the other of them must have done something wrong. Either Turgényef was bragging when he said that he shot it dead; or my father was wrong in maintaining that the dog could not fail to find a bird that had been killed. And this must needs happen just when they were both so anxious to avoid every sort of misunderstanding! That was the very reason why they had carefully fought shy of all serious conversation and spent all their time merely amusing themselves. . . .

When papa said good-night to us that evening, he whispered that we were to get up early and go back to the place to have a good hunt for the bird. And what was the result? The woodcock, in falling, had caught in the fork of a branch, right at the top of an aspen-tree, and it was all we could do to knock it out from there. When we brought it home in triumph it was quite an "occasion," and my father and Turgényef were far more delighted than we were. It turned out that they were both right, and everything ended to their common satisfaction.

Iván Sergéyevitch slept downstairs, in my father's study. When the party broke up for the night I used to see him to his room and while he was undressing, I sat on his bed and talked sport with him. He asked me if I could shoot. I said yes, but that I

did n't care to go out shooting because I had nothing but a rotten old one-barreled gun.

"I 'll give you a gun," he said. "I 've got two in Paris, and I have no earthly need for both. It 's not an expensive gun, but it 's quite a good one. Next time I come to Russia I 'll bring it with me."

I was quite taken aback and thanked him heartily. I was tremendously delighted at the idea that I was to have a real "central-fire" gun.

Unfortunately, Turgényef never came to Russia again.[9] I tried afterwards to buy the gun he had spoken of from his legatees, not because it was a "central-fire" gun, but because it was "Turgényef's gun"; but I did not succeed.

That is all that I can remember about this delightful, naïvely-cordial man, with the childlike eyes and the childlike laugh, and in the picture my mind preserves of him the memory of his grandeur melts into the charm of his good-nature and simplicity.

In 1883 my father received from Iván Sergéyevitch his last farewell letter, written in pencil on his death-bed; and I remember with what emotion he read it. When the news of his death came, my father could talk of nothing else for several days, and

[9] From Yásnaya Polyána Turgényef went on to Moscow, for the opening of the Pushkin Memorial, and received one of the greatest ovations ever accorded to a Russian writer. On his return to Paris he developed cancer of the backbone from which he never recovered.

enquired in every possible quarter for details of his illness and last days.

Apropos of this letter of Turgényef's, I should like to say that my father was sincerely annoyed, when he heard applied to himself the epithet "great writer of the land of Russia," [10] which was taken from it.

He always hated *clichés*, and he regarded this one as quite absurd.

"Why 'writer of the land'? I never knew before that a man could be the writer of a land. People get attached to some nonsensical expression and go on repeating it in season and out of season."

I have given extracts above from Turgényef's letters, which show the invariable consistency with which he applauded my father's literary talents. Unfortunately I cannot say the same of my father's opinion of Turgényef. In this again the want of dispassionateness in his nature revealed itself. Personal relations prevented him from being objective and impartial.

In 1867, apropos of Turgényef's "Smoke" which had just appeared, he wrote to Fet: "There is hardly any love of anything in 'Smoke' and hardly any poetry. The only thing for which it shows any love is light and playful adultery, and for that reason the poetry of the story is repulsive. . . . I am timid in expressing this opinion, because I cannot

[10] Turgényef's own words were "of the Russian land."—I. T.

TOLSTOY AND HIS FAMILY IN 1893

Standing (left to right): Ilyá, Lyoff, Alexándra, Sergéi
Sitting (left to right): Mikháil, Tatyána, the Countess, the Count, Maria, Andréi

form a sober judgment about an author whose personality I dislike."

In 1865, before the final breach with Turgényef, he writes, also to Fet: "I do not like 'Enough.' A personal, subjective treatment is never good unless it is full of life and passion; but the subjectivity in this case is full of lifeless suffering." [11]

In the autumn of 1883, after Turgényef's death,[12] when the family had gone into Moscow for the winter, my father stayed at Yásnaya Polyána alone with Agáfya Mikháilovna, and set earnestly about reading all Turgényef's works.

This is what he wrote to my mother at the time.

"I am always thinking about Turgényef: I am intensely fond of him, and sorry for him and do nothing but read him. I live entirely with him. I shall certainly give a lecture on him, or write it and have it read; tell Yúryef.[13]

"I have just been reading Turgényef's 'Enough.' Read it; it is perfectly charming."

Unfortunately, my father's intended lecture on Turgényef never came off. The Government, in the person of the Minister Count D. A. Tolstoy,[14] for-

[11] "Enough, the diary of a dead artist," 1864, is a short story, a record of the disillusionment of an artist before he commits suicide.

[12] He died in August, 1883.

[13] Editor of *Rússkaya Mysl.*—I. T. *Russian Thought,* a Moscow monthly.

[14] D. A. Tolstoy, the most distant relation, or none, of Lyof

bade him to pay this last tribute to his dead friend, with whom he had quarreled all his life only because he could not be indifferent to him.

Nikoláyevitch, was Minister of the Interior, Procurator of the Holy Synod and President of the Academy of Science. In the first capacity he represented the new régime of Alexander III by curbing the liberty of the press. He died in harness in 1889.

CHAPTER XV

GÁRSHIN

MY reminiscences of Vsévolod Mikháilovitch Gárshin all date from my childhood, and they are, in consequence, scanty and fragmentary.

He visited Yásnaya Polyána in the early spring of 1880. I have since learnt from his biography that this same spring he left the Province of Tula for Khárkof and was there put in a lunatic asylum. This explains certain oddities in the behavior of this modest and charming gentleman, certain peculiarities which startled us, and thanks to which I remember him so well as I do on his first visit to Yásnaya Polyána. It never occurred to any of us at the time that we had to do with a sick man, unhinged by the approach of his malady and consequently not quite normal. We attributed his oddities to mere eccentricity. He was not the first eccentric visitor we had had at Yásnaya by a long way!

It was between five and six in the evening. We were sitting round the big table in the *zala* just finishing dinner, when the footman, Sergéi Petróvitch, as

he handed round the last dish, told my father that there was a "man" downstairs who wanted to see him.

"What does he want?" asked my father.

"He did n't say; he says he wants to see you."

"All right; I 'll be down in a minute."

Without finishing his pudding, my father got up from the table and went downstairs. We children jumped up too and ran after him.

In the hall stood a young man poorly dressed and with his overcoat on. My father said "How-do-you-do," and asked him what he wanted.

"The first thing I want is a glass of vodka and the tail of a herring," said the man, looking into my father's eyes with a bold bright expression in his own and a childish smile. Quite unprepared for any such answer my father was considerably taken aback for a moment. The reply seemed so extraordinary, coming from an apparently sober, well-mannered, educated man. What sort of queer fish was this?

My father looked at him again with that profound and piercing glance of his, met his eyes once more and broke into a broad smile.

Gárshin smiled back, like a child which has just tried to be funny and looks into its mother's eyes to see if its little joke is well received. And it *was* well received. Or rather, it was not the joke that found favor, but the child's eyes, at once so luminous and so deep.

There was so much frankness, so much spirituality in this man's gaze, and at the same time so much pure childish good-humor, that when one met him it was impossible not to feel an interest in him and take him to one's heart.

Evidently that was what Lyof Nikoláyevitch felt too.

Telling Sergéi to bring some vodka and some sort of *zakúska* he opened the study-door and asked Gárshin to take off his overcoat and come in.

"You must be frozen!" he said kindly, examining his visitor with an attentive air.

"I don't know; I dare say I am a bit; I've been traveling a long time."

After a glass of vodka and a *zakúska*, Gárshin told my father his name and said that he "wrote a bit."

"And what have you written?"

"'Four Days.' It's a story that they published in the *Otétchestvennya Zapíski.*[1] You probably have n't heard of it."

"Why of course, I remember it well. So it was you who wrote that? A capital story! Heard of it? I paid it very particular attention. So you were in the war?"

[1] The *Fatherland Record,* a monthly magazine and review, published in St. Petersburg. The story "Four Days on the Battlefield," describing the experiences of a soldier wounded in the Russo-Turkish War, is very well known and has been translated into English.

"Yes, I was through the whole campaign." [2]

"What a lot of interesting things you must have seen! Come, tell us all about it; this is very interesting."

And my father questioned Gárshin systematically and at length about his experiences. He sat beside him on the leather sofa, and we children ranged ourselves in a semicircle about them.

Unfortunately I do not remember this conversation in detail and I cannot undertake to record it. I only remember that it was extremely interesting. The man who so startled us in the hall had ceased to exist by now. Before us sat an intelligent and charming companion, giving us a vivid and faithful picture of all the horrors of war that he had been through, and his account was so fascinating that we spent the whole evening there beside him, devouring him with our eyes and listening attentively to all that he said.

Recalling that evening now, when I know that at that time poor Vsévolod Mikháilovitch was on the eve of a serious mental breakdown, and searching my impressions of him for signs of the approach of it, I can only say that, if he showed tokens of any abnormality then, they consisted only in his talking

[2] Gárshin threw up his University career to volunteer as a private for the war. He greatly distinguished himself by his courage, was wounded, and was mentioned in despatches.

too much and too interestingly. With wide-open, brightly glowing eyes, he spread picture after picture before us, and the more he talked, the more picturesque and expressive grew his language. When he paused from time to time, the expression of his countenance changed, and the same gentle, charming child looked out at us as before.

I do not remember whether he spent the night at Yásnaya, or whether he went away the same day.

A few days later he came again, this time mounted on a horse with no saddle. We saw him from the window, riding down the avenue. He was talking to himself and waving his arms with large strange gestures. When he reached the house he got off his horse, held it by the reins, and asked us for a map of Russia. Some one asked him what he wanted it for.

"I want to see which is the way to Khárkof. I am going to Khárkof to see my mother."

"On horseback?"

"On horseback. Why not?"

We got him an atlas, and helped him to look out Khárkof; he made a note of the towns he would have to pass on the way, said good-by, and left us. We heard afterwards that he had somehow contrived to purloin the horse he came on from between the shafts of a cab in Tula. The cab-driver, who did not realize that he had to do with a man of disordered

mind, spent a long time looking for his horse and had the greatest difficulty in getting it back.

After this Gárshin disappeared. How he got to Khárkof, and how he came to be put in the asylum, I do not know.

A few years later two little booklets of his stories were published.[3] I read them when I was grown up and there is no need for me to say what a deep impression they made on me. Could they have been written by that man with the wonderful eyes, who sat on the leather sofa in the study that night, and told us all those interesting stories? Yes, yes; of course it was the same man, and I recognized him in the two books. But now the passing childish interest in a stranger who had chanced to cross my path, was transformed into deep affection for the man and the artist and I am glad that I can still recall even these sad and fragmentary memories of him.

I had the good fortune to see Gárshin once more, at our house in Moscow. This was about a year before his death. I think my father was out at the time and it was my mother who received him. He was gloomy and silent and did not stay long. I remember my mother asking him why he wrote so little.

"How can I write when I am busy all day at my work, which stupefies me and makes my head ache?"

[3] One of these "booklets" was "The Red Flower," the tale of a lunatic, his sufferings and his hallucinations, the fruit of Gárshin's own experience.

he answered bitterly and fell into a reverie.[4]

My mother questioned him about his home life[5] and was very kindly and sympathetic with him.

I was struck once more by his big, handsome eyes, deeply shaded by long eyelashes, and I involuntarily compared them with his eyes as I had seen them before. They were just the same; but the first time they had been alive with energy and courage, and now they were sad and pensive. Life had robbed them of their brilliance and drawn a film of sorrow over them. This sorrow revealed itself in all his being. One wanted to talk softly and tenderly with him, to take him to one's bosom, as it were, and caress him. When I heard of his death I was not surprised. Such men do not live long.

Answering, according to my own impression, the question which my mother put to him, why he wrote so little, I should be inclined to apply to him what Turgényef said of Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Tolstoy, my father's brother:

"He wrote little because he had all the good qualities but none of the failings which a man needs to be a great writer."

[4] Gárshin had some light employment as Secretary to a Railway Committee, something after the manner of that "Joint Board of the Associated Clearing-Houses of the Southwestern Railway System" that Tolstoy makes fun of in "Anna Karénina." He killed himself in 1888, at the age of 33, in a fit of melancholia, a malady to which he was always subject in the spring.

[5] He had lately married a lady-doctor.

CHAPTER XVI

THE FIRST "DARK PEOPLE." THE ASSASSINATION OF ALEXANDER II. THE SPY.

THE revolutionary movement in Russia, which led to the 1st of March, 1881,[1] hardly affected Yásnaya Polyána, and we knew of it only from newspaper accounts of various attempts at assassination, which were repeated almost every year at that period.

My father was visited from time to time by certain "dark people," [2] whom he received in his study, and with whom he always argued warmly. As a rule these unkempt and unwashed visitors appeared no more than once, and then, meeting with no encouragement from my father, disappeared forever. The only ones who came back were those who were interested in hearing of my father's Christian ideas for the first time, and from my childhood onwards I can remember certain "Nihilists," who often turned up

[1] March 13th, new style: the date of the assassination of Alexander II.

[2] That is, proletarians. The author uses the word here in reference to educated people, who for political purposes, or on principle, had "gone into the people" and become peasants or tramps.

again at Yásnaya and under my father's influence gave up terrorism altogether.

"The Revolutionary and the Christian," said my father, "stand at the two extreme points of an uncompleted circle. Their nearness is therefore illusory: in reality there are no two points further removed from each other. If they are to come together they must turn right back and traverse the whole circumference."

. . . . . .

This is how the news of the assassination of Alexander II reached us.

On the first of March my father had gone out, according to custom, for a walk on the main road before dinner. A thaw had set in after a snowy winter. Deep thaw-holes had formed in the snow on the roads, and the hollows were full of water. Owing to the bad conditions of the roads we had given up sending into Tula and there were no newspapers.

On the main road he met a wandering Italian organ-grinder, with his barrel-organ and fortune-telling birds. He was traveling on foot from Tula. They got into conversation.

"Where do you come from? Where are you going to?"

"Me from Tula. Business bad, very bad: me get no eat, birds get no eat, Tsar get killed."

"Tsar? What Tsar? Who killed him? When?"

"Russian Tsar, Petersburg, throwed a bomb, seed a paper."

When he got home my father at once told us of Alexander II's assassination, and the papers which arrived the next day confirmed the news.

I remember the overwhelming impression which this senseless murder produced on my father. Besides his horror at the cruel death of the Tsar, "who has done so much good to people and always wished them so much good, that good old man," he could not help thinking of the murderers, of the approaching executions, and "not so much about them as about those who were preparing to take part in *their* murder, and especially about Alexander III."

For some days he went about wrapped in gloomy meditation, and at last bethought him to write a letter to the new Emperor, Alexander III.

There was a great deal of talk about the style in which the letter was to be written, whether he was to use the method of address required by etiquette, or the method employed among ordinary mortals; whether he was to write it with his own hand or have it copied by Alexander Petróvitch Ivánof who was staying with us at the time. Good paper was sent for from Tula, the letter was altered and corrected and copied out fair again several times, and at last my father posted it off to St. Petersburg to N. N.

A GENERAL VIEW OF YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

Strakhof, asking him to send it on to the Emperor through K. N. Pobyedonóstsef.

How firmly he believed then in the power of his own conviction over others! How he hoped that the criminals would be, not forgiven—he had no hope of that—but at any rate not executed! He devoured the newspapers eagerly and lived in hope and expectancy until he read that all the participators in the crime had been hanged. Pobyedonóstsef had not even handed on the letter; he sent it back, because, as he said in a letter to my father, he was prevented "by his religion" from discharging such a commission.

The letter afterwards came to the Emperor's hands through a friend. When he read it, Alexander III is reported to have said: "If the crime had concerned myself I should have had the right to pardon them, but I could not pardon them on my father's behalf."

I remember that not only my father but we children too were horrified by this execution of several people, and a woman among them. At that time the death penalty was an exceptional event to which people were not yet accustomed.[3] It was not like nowadays.

. . . . . .

As the years passed the number of "dark people" who visited Yásnaya Polyána began gradually to

[3] The punishment for murder in Russia is penal servitude. The death penalty is inflicted only by court-martial or by the civil courts under special powers from the Crown.

increase. In the end there were hardly any revolutionaries among them; the majority of them were either people of the same way of thinking as my father, or people in search of truth, who came to him for advice and moral support.

What a number of such folk came and went! Of every age and every calling. What a number of sincere and deeply convinced people, and what a number of Pharisees who only wanted to rub shoulders with the name of Tolstoy and get some advantage for themselves out of it! What a number of cranks, one might almost say, of maniacs!

For instance there was an old Swede who came to Yásnaya Polyána and stayed a considerable time; he went about bare-footed and half naked summer and winter. His principle was "simplification" and getting near to Nature. My father was greatly interested in him at one time, but it ended in his going too far in the matter of "simplification," losing all sense of shame, and indeed, of decency, and having to be turned out of the house.

Another time an individual turned up who only fed once in every two days. The day he arrived at Yásnaya was his day for not eating. The whole day from morning onwards there was food spread on the table, breakfast, tea, coffee, lunch, dinner, tea again with bread and butter and cakes; but he sat apart and ate nothing.

"I ate yesterday," he answered modestly when he was offered anything.

"What do you eat the days you do eat?" he was asked.

It appeared that he ate precisely a pound of bread, a pound of vegetables and a pound of fruit.

"And you 're not so very thin!" said my father, astonished.

We had pretty frequent visits from a tall fair morphino-maniac of the name of O., who proved the truth of Christianity by mathematical formulæ; then there was the short dark ne'er-do-well P.; there was the converted Jew F. who lodged and worked in the village; and last of all came Zhénitchka S——n, a spy sent down by the secret police.[4]

One day in summer as we were playing about in the garden we came on a young gentleman sitting in a ditch and calmly smoking a cigarette. Our dogs ran at him and barked. We secretly egged the dogs on and ran away ourselves in the opposite direction.

A few days later we met the same young gentleman on the road, not far from the house. When he saw us, he greeted us cheerfully and entered into conversation. It appeared that he had settled in lodgings in the village, at the cottage of one of our out-

[4] Literally, by the "Third Section," i. e., of the Emperor's Personal Chancellery, with jurisdiction over the gendarmerie, political exile, sectarians, etc.; abolished in 1880.

door men, and was *en villégiature* there with his intended wife Ada and her mother.

"Come in some day and have a cup of tea," he said to me; "I 'm rather bored. We 'll have a chat; I 'll tell you all about myself. And, by the way, you might do me a service. I 'm going to be married in a few days, and I have n't a best man. I hope you won't refuse to do me that pleasure."

The proposal was a seductive one and I agreed to it.

In a few days Mr. S——n had made himself so charming to me that we became great friends, and I visited him every day and often spent hours with him.

The day of the wedding I got leave from home for the whole day, put on a clean jacket and was very proud of my function as best man. When we got back from the church, I dined with the happy pair and we drank their health in infused vodka.[5]

When my mother saw how pleased I was with my new friend, she took alarm and restrained my devotion. One of her arguments against S——n was that a well-mannered man who invited a boy to his house was bound by the rules of politeness first of all to make the acquaintance of his parents.

[5] *Nalivka*, that is, vodka infused with soaked fruits, like cherry brandy.

"I can't let my son visit a man whom I don't know at all."

I told S——n, and he called on my mother the same day and apologized for not having come before. After this he came to know my father and paid us frequent visits. Everybody got used to him and treated him frankly and familiarly as a friend of the family. At times he joined my father in his outdoor work and he seemed entirely to share his convictions.

In the autumn, when he was leaving Yásnaya Polyána, he called on my father and made a clean breast of his misdeeds. He confessed that he was a spy, sent by the secret police to keep an eye on my father and the visitors to the house.

Another man who appeared at Yásnaya Polyána a good deal later and played the same part as S——n, was the prison chaplain from Tula who visited us periodically to have religious discussions with my father. By the assumed Liberalism of his conversation he drew my father out to be explicit about his views, and pretended to be deeply interested in them.

"What a queer man he is," said my father, with some astonishment, "and he seems to be sincere. I asked if the ecclesiastical authorities would not fall foul of him for coming to see me so often; but he does n't care a continental whether they do or don't.

I began to think that he must have been sent to spy on me and told him what I suspected, but he assures me that he comes quite of his own accord."

When my father was excommunicated it was this very priest that the Synod cited as having tried in vain to "bring him to a right way of thinking" by their orders.

The last time he came to see my father was after his excommunication, during one of his illnesses. He was told that my father was ill and could not see him. This was in the summer. The priest sat down on the verandah and refused to go until he had seen Lyof Nikoláyevitch personally. An hour or two passed, and still he remained obstinately seated there, waiting. He had to be spoken to extremely sharply and told to go. After that I never saw him again.

AT THE POKROF HOSPITAL

TOLSTOY AMONG THE PEASANT CHILDREN

CHAPTER XVII

THE END OF THE SEVENTIES. THE GREAT CHANGE. THE MAIN ROAD.

TRACING my reminiscences forward step by step, I have imperceptibly reached the eighties, and, in doing so, passed on to the time of my first manhood. In real life the transition was still more imperceptible. I remember that I did not realize it until it was already an accomplished fact. I regretted my lost childhood and wept bitterly.

In proportion as my childhood had been sunny and cloudless, my early manhood was dark and gloomy. Is this the common lot, or does this period differ with different people? I do not know.

I believe that I was unconsciously affected by my father's doubts and distresses, which had begun in 1876, when I was ten years old. Like every child, I was interested in my father's and mother's private life only in so far as it affected me. It was about this time that my father's quest for a religion began. I will try, as well as I can, to tell all that has stuck in my memory from that period.

Ever since I could remember, our family had been brought up on traditional lines, according to purely

Orthodox Russian Church ideas. Every evening before we went to bed we had to say a prayer for papa, mama, our brothers and sisters, and all Orthodox Christians. On the vigil of all the great Church festivals a priest used to come to our house and hold vespers, and the first and last weeks of Lent the whole household fasted. It was my mother who directed these matters; my father was pretty indifferent about religion, and did not always trouble to come to the *zala* when the priest was there.

So it was in our early childhood.

After that my father's attitude towards the Church began to change. I remember that short period of his life when he attended mass every Sunday and strictly observed all the fasts. From that time forward he talked more and more often about religion. Whoever visited us at Yásnaya Polyána, whether it was Ushakóf, the Governor of the Province of Tula, Count Bóbrinski the Radstockite,[1] Strakhof, Fet, Rayévski, Pyotr Fyódorovitch Samárin, or Prince

[1] Count Bóbrinski the Radstockite. The late Lord Radstock went to Russia in 1874 and had an immense success as an Evangelical missionary in the most unlikely of all missionary fields, the fashionable drawing-rooms of St. Petersburg. His followers are generally known in Russia as Pashkovites, after Colonel Pashkóf, his chief supporter. For some time the missionaries carried all before them, founded a Society and scattered tracts broadcast. Then the Government took alarm, and the propaganda was driven from the capital into the country districts. Count and Countess Bóbrinski were the most active Pashkovite propagandists in the Province of Tula. According to Mrs. Edward Trotter ("Undertones of the

Urúsof, it was all the same: the conversation was sure to come round to religious subjects, and endless discussions arose, in which my father was often quite harsh and disagreeable.

As my father grew more religious, so did we. In the earlier days we had fasted only in the first and last weeks of Lent, but from 1877 we took to observing the whole of all the fasts and zealously attended all the church services.

In the summer we prepared for communion during the Assumption Fast.[2] I remember how we used to be taken to church on the outside-car, and what an exalted religious frame of mind we were all in: we called all our sins to mind, and solemnly prepared for confession. It was a rainy summer and there was a great crop of funguses. Along the highroad on the way to church there was an extraordinary number of mushrooms and we used to stop on the way home and fill our hats with them.

That same summer Shtchególenkof, the traveling minstrel,[3] stayed with us at Yásnaya. He was

19th Century," 1905) Count Bóbrinski, while still a Minister of State, was converted by a casual conversation about Lord Radstock with a friend and went through a momentary experience resembling that of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. In 1884 Colonel Pashkóf was turned out of Russia, and the overt operations of the Society were put an end to.

[2] August 1-15, old style, in honor of the Virgin Mary. It is the next strictest fast after Lent.

[3] Reciter or chanter of *bylinas* or old ballads of the heroic age, a profession frequently followed by blind beggars.

called by his patronymic "Petróvitch."[4] He recited ballads something in the same style as the blind minstrels, but there was none of that offensive snuffle in his voice which I always found so repulsive in them. The chief picture I have of him in my mind is sitting on the stone steps of the verandah outside my father's study. When he recited, I used to enjoy sitting and gazing at his gray beard, which hung in twisted locks, and his endless stories delighted me. One tasted the flavor of hoary antiquity in them and felt the sound good sense of the people encrusted on them in the passage of the centuries. My father listened to him with the greatest interest; he made him recite something new every day and Petróvitch was always able to satisfy his demands. He was inexhaustible. My father afterwards borrowed subjects from his stories for his tales for the people.[5]

. . . . . .

At this distance of time it is not easy for me to unravel all my mental experiences of that date. I only remember the general impression, which amounted to feeling that my father had somehow changed and something was happening to him. That "something," which was beyond the comprehension

[4] By courtesy, distinguished and elderly people of the peasant class are addressed not by their Christian or surnames, but by the middle name, formed by adding *-ovitch* or *-ovna* to their father's Christian name.

[5] "What Men Live By" and "The Three Old Men."—I. T.

of a child, expressed itself in various ways and went on for several years, until about 1883. A good deal that happened then became clearer to me at a later date, but at the time, what I was chiefly sensible of was the change in my father's disposition, and as I had no notion of the acute moral crisis he was passing through, I took very little interest in its real nature.

In the spring of 1878, my father fasted and kept Lent strictly, and in the summer of the same year he visited the old monk Father Ambrose at the Opta Hermitage. I do not remember what he told us about this visit. I only know that he came back greatly dissatisfied and that soon afterwards he began to criticize the rites and traditions of the Church, and finally repudiated them altogether.

At the same time, instead of going out riding or bathing or shooting or coursing, my father took more and more to going for walks on the highroad,[6] where he picked up with all manner of tramps and pilgrims with whom he delighted in conversing. This highroad, which runs from Moscow to Kief passes less than a mile from the demesne of Yásnaya Polyána. In the old days, before the railway, this was the only means of communication between the north and south of Russia. The old post-boy Pável Pentyakóf

[6] The *chaussée*, the cambered stone-road, as opposed to the ordinary flat earthen highways.

was still alive in my time, and I can remember his telling me how he drove the Emperor Alexander II along this road.

When the railway was built the highroad lost considerably in importance, so far as vehicular traffic was concerned, but it still continued to be the favorite route for tramps,[7] and especially for pilgrims, with bast-wallets on their shoulders and long staffs in their hands, on their way to Kief, to the Trinity monastery, to the shrine of the Iberian Virgin, or the other holy places scattered along its length.[8]

"I 'm off to the Nevsky Prospect," my father used to say jokingly, as he took his staff and started out for his walk. When he got back for dinner, he would tell us all about the interesting people he had met, and his note-books of that date are full of vivid personal descriptions, sayings and proverbs, and especially of characteristic expressions of popular wisdom.

Not having found satisfaction in the religion of the Church, my father set himself to seek for God

[7] The English word "tramp" has not the same association as the Russian *strannik*, the wanderers on Russian roads not being so much a homeless population, drifting from the towns, as old peasants who have left their cottages from philosophical or religious conviction.

[8] That is, to visit the Catacombs at Kief; the shrine of the Iberian Virgin at the Resurrection Gate of China-Town in Moscow; and that city of churches and monasteries known as the Trinity-Sergius Lavra, some 40 miles out from Moscow; all daily thronged with hosts of pilgrims.

in the beliefs of the common people, and in them he found the key which afterwards unlocked the door for him to the study and new interpretation of the Gospel. Once he had set out on this path, he gave himself up entirely to his new search and made a sudden and complete breach with his former life.

In his "Confession," he says, with regard to this period of his life: "The life of our circle of society, the rich, the learned, not only repelled me but lost all meaning." And this renunciation of everything that had made our life what it was up to that time reacted most disagreeably on all the rest of us. As a boy of twelve, I felt that my father was getting more and more estranged from us, and that our interests were not merely indifferent to him, but actually alien and repulsive. He got gloomy and irritable, often quarreled with my mother about trifles, and from our former jovial and high-spirited ring-leader and companion was transformed before our eyes into a stern and censorious propagandist. His harsh denunciations of the aimless life of gentlefolk, of their gluttony, their indolence, and spoliation of the industrious working-classes, grew more and more frequent.

"Here we sit in our well-heated rooms, and this very day a man was found frozen to death on the highroad.

"He was frozen to death because no one would give him a night's lodging.

"We stuff ourselves with cutlets and pastry of every sort, while in Samara the people are dying by thousands with swollen stomachs from famine.

"We go riding and driving to the bathing-place, while Prokófi's last gelding lies dead and he has no beast to plow his strips with.

"We are still snoring in bed, while the tailor has had time to walk into Tula and back to get hooks and eyes for our fur jackets."

I will not say that when my father spoke so simply we children did not understand what he said. Of course we understood. But it spoiled our selfish childish happiness and broke up all our daily life. When we were getting up theatricals at Yásnaya and the two Baroness Mengdens came, and Núnya Novosíltsef and the Kislénskis, and we were all enjoying ourselves with games and croquet and talking about falling in love, suddenly my father would come in and with a single word or, even worse, with a single look, would spoil the whole thing. And we would feel bored and, as it were, rather ashamed at times: "It would have been better if he had n't come." And the worst of it was that he felt this himself. He did not want to spoil our fun—for after all he was very fond of us—but nevertheless he did spoil it. He said nothing, but he thought something. We all knew what he thought, and that was what made us so uncomfortable.

GROUP OF PEASANT GIRLS AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

Meanwhile our family life continued to flow along its accustomed channels, and to follow the lines of its normal development. We still had the same Nikolái the cook, the same "Anke Pie," transplanted from the Behrs family and deeply rooted in the life of Yásnaya Polyána, the same tutors and governesses, the same lessons, the same succession of babies that my mother nursed at her breast; all the foundations on which the life of our ant-heap rested were as unshaken as ever and as necessary for our selfish enjoyment. It is true that we felt an irreconcilable division in our lives, we felt that the chief thing had somehow gone out of them, because my father grew more and more remote from us; it was often extremely painful; but we could not alter our lives as he wished us to; it seemed absolutely out of the question.

The conflict of ideas with traditions, of "life according to God" with "Anke Pie" resulted as such conflicts in human life always do; tradition got the better of it, and the ideas achieved nothing beyond spoiling the flavor of our pie with their bitterness. What hope was there of reconciling "life according to God," the life of pilgrims and peasants, in which my father delighted, with those infallible principles which had been instilled into us from our cradle up: with the invariable duty of taking soup and cutlets at dinner, of talking French and English, of prepar-

ing for the Gymnase and the University, of learning one's part for theatricals? And we children often felt that it was not we who failed to understand our father, but on the contrary, it was he who had ceased to understand us, because he was occupied with "some notions of his own."

These "notions" were his new philosophy and the piles of books which grew up in his study. He got whole mountains of religious works from somewhere, lives of the Saints, Canons, and Homilies of the Fathers of the Church, and spent days together, shut up in his study, reading them and meditating. He would come out to dinner gloomy and thoughtful, and when he talked it was always about these "notions of his own," and we all found him tiresome and uninteresting.

When I recall this period, I am filled with horror at the thought of what he must have been suffering mentally. When he utterly repudiated everything he had delighted in before, repudiated that patriarchal order of country-house life which he had lately described in his novels with such affection and which he had built up for himself, repudiated all his former interests, from war down to literary fame, family life and religion—how terribly his solitude must have weighed upon him! All the more terribly because it was the solitude of a man in the midst of a crowd of people with whom he had nothing in com-

mon. Having started with repudiation and not yet having found those positive principles of love with which the study of the Gospels afterwards provided him and which were the foundation of all his philosophy of life, he wore himself out with anguish, like a man condemned to death, and for two years struggled with the temptation to suicide. "At that time, for all my 'happiness,' I used to hide ropes from myself, so as not to hang myself on the cross-beam between the bookshelves in my room, where I was alone every night when I undressed, and gave up going out with a gun, in order not to be tempted by too easy a means of ridding myself of the burden of existence." [9]

But we did not understand him.

And when, to relieve the intolerable oppression of the thoughts that tormented him, he tried to pour them out before us, we drew timidly away from him, in order not to have our childish, selfish happiness spoilt.

It is true that at times he entered into our life, interested himself in our lessons, and tried to adapt himself to our understanding, but we felt that the interest was strained and artificial, not a father's interest but a teacher's. And he was conscious of this himself.

[9] "Confession," published by Elpidin, Geneva.—I. T.

In one of his letters to V. I. Alekséyef,[10] written in 1882, describing the life of the family he says: "Seryózha is hard at work and believes in the University. Tánya, half-good, half-serious and half-clever, becomes no worse, perhaps improves a little. Ilyúsha grows and does no work; his spirit is not yet crushed however by organic processes. Lyólya and Masha, I think, are better than the rest; they have not caught my bad manners as the elder children have, and they seem to be developing under more favorable conditions. . . ."

I have quoted this letter, with its touching self-condemnation, in order to show how discerning and conscientious my father was about our education, and how bitterly he must have felt the periods of estrangement, when his inward struggles so distracted him from his family that he could not bring himself to treat us as he wished.

[10] A former tutor at Yásnaya Polyána.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MOVE TO MOSCOW. SYNTÁYEF. THE CENSUS. FYÓDOROF. SOLOVYÓF.

IN the autumn of 1881 the whole family settled in Moscow.

This move, which was the logical outcome of all our preceding life, appeared to be necessary for the three following chief reasons:

My eldest brother Sergéi was at the University and it was out of the question to let him live in Moscow without somebody to look after him.

It was time for my sister Tánya to "come out." She could not be left to run wild in the country without any decent society.

It was far easier to educate the rest of the family, if my father was not going to help, in Moscow than at Yásnaya.

In the summer my mother went into Moscow, a flat was rented in Money Lane [1] and in the autumn we moved.

In the spring of that year I had been to Tula and passed the examination qualifying for promotion

[1] Dénezhny Pereúlok.

from the Fourth into the Fifth Form, and it was intended that I should go to a State Gymnase. My father called on the head of one of the Moscow Classical Gymnases to enter my name, but an unexpected difficulty arose: among the papers required by the rules for my entry my father was asked to sign one guaranteeing my loyalty to the Tsar.[2]

He refused to sign it, and I had to go to Polivánof's private Gymnase instead, where I was accepted on the strength of the examination, but without any unnecessary formalities.

"How can I guarantee the conduct of another human being, even my own son's?" said my father indignantly. "I told the Warden that it was absurd to ask parents to sign such papers, and he agreed that it was an unnecessary formality, but it appears after all that they cannot take a boy without it."

When we moved into Moscow we all fell under the influence of the new sensations of town life. Each of us was differently affected according to his or her disposition. My mother threw herself energetically into the arrangement of the flat and the purchase of furniture, and under Uncle Kóstya's guidance called on all the people that she ought to cultivate and saw to Tánya's having parties to go to. Seryózha was wrapped up in the life of the Uni-

[2] Blagonadyózhnost, literally "trustworthiness," has this narrower specific meaning in official documents.

versity; while I, in the intervals between going to school and preparing my lessons, played knuckle-bones with the children in the street, and by the spring had already fallen in love with a schoolgirl whom my people did not know.

That winter my father made friends with Syntáyef the sectarian, who greatly interested him and had an undoubted influence on his views. He was a simple peasant-proprietor of Túla Province, a stone-mason by trade. My father had already heard of him from Prugávin[3] in the Samara days and went over to his village to see him.

Syntáyef came to Moscow afterwards, in the winter, and stayed for some time with us in Money Lane. At first glance he produced the impression of the most ordinary sort of impoverished *muzhík;* he had a thin, mud-colored beard, tinged with gray, a greasy black sheepskin jacket, which he wore both indoors and out of doors, big colorless eyes and the typical Northern pronunciation of *o*.[4]

Like every self-respecting *muzhík* he knew how to behave himself with simple dignity, and betrayed no shyness when he found himself in good society; and when he spoke one felt that what he said was the

[3] Prugávin: a man Tolstoy met in Samara, who was studying the varieties of religious belief among the Samara peasants.

[4] That is to say, that he pronounced unaccented *o*'s as *o*'s. In Moscow and the southern half of Russia unaccented *o* is pronounced like *a*.

result of careful reflection and that it would be impossible to shake his convictions.

Syntáyef agreed with my father in many respects. Like my father, Syntáyef rejected the Church and all ritual observances and, like him again, preached brotherhood, love, and "life according to God." "Everything is within you," he used to say: "where love is, there is God." Being a simple man and not understanding compromises, Syntáyef rejected all violence and would not allow it even as a means of resisting evil. He refused to pay taxes on principle, because they go to maintain the army. And when the police distrained on his property and sold his cattle, he looked on at his own ruin without a murmur and offered no opposition. "It 's their sin; let them do it. I will not open the gates for them, but if they must, let them go in; I have no locks," he said, when he told the tale.

His family shared his convictions and had all things in common, not recognizing private property. When his son was called on to serve in the army he refused to take the oath because the Gospel says "Swear not," and refused to handle a rifle because it "smelt of blood." For this he was sent to the Schlüsselburg Disciplinary Battalion and suffered great privations.

Syntáyef saw the realization of his ideal of "life according to God" in the early Christian community

A LATER FAMILY GROUP

Standing (left to right): Alexándra, Mikháil, Tatyána's husband, Andréi
Sitting (left to right): Niece, Princess Obolensky, Tatyána, Count, Countess with grandchildren, Sister Mar

of goods. "Fields ought not to be divided, forests ought not to be divided. Then we should need no locks, no trade, no ships, no war. . . . Every one would be of one heart and one mind; there would be no yours and no mine; everything would belong to the town or village," he said, and in his words one could feel a profound belief in the attainability of these ideals, which he got from the Gospel.

My father was so much interested in his doctrines that he often invited people to meet Syntáyef and made him expound his views to them.

It is not to be wondered at that the appearance of a man like this in Moscow, and especially in Tolstoy's house, excited the attention of the authorities. Prince Dolgorúki, the Governor-General, sent a smart Captain of Gendarmes to my father with orders to enquire what Syntáyef was doing in his house, what his opinions were and how long he was going to stay in Moscow. I shall never forget how my father received this Gendarme in his study, because I never imagined that he was capable of losing his temper to such an extent. He did not shake hands with him or ask him to sit down, but talked to him standing. When he heard what he had come about he answered curtly that he did not consider himself obliged to answer such questions. When the Captain endeavored to reply, my father turned as white as a sheet and pointing to the door, said in

quivering tones: "Leave the house! For Heaven's sake, leave the house! . . . At once! . . . I beg you leave the house!" he shouted at last, throwing off all restraint and hardly giving the bewildered Gendarme time to go out, he slammed the door after him with all his might.

He was sorry for his outburst afterwards, he regretted that he had lost his temper and had been rude to any one; but all the same, when the Governor-General persisted, and a few days later sent his own chief secretary Istómin on the same errand, he refused to answer his questions and merely said that if Vladímir Andréyevitch wanted to see him, there was nothing to prevent him from coming himself. I do not know how this friction with the authorities would have ended if Syntáyef had not gone away soon afterwards.

. . . . . .

That same year my father took part in the three-days census of Moscow. He selected the poorest quarter of the city, near the Smolensk Market, including Protótchny Lane and the then famous night-shelters, the "Rzhanóf Fortress" and others.

We went about of an evening through all the rooms, amid horrible smells and dirt, and my father questioned each of the lodgers as to what he lived on, what brought him there, how much he paid, and what he had to eat. In the general room, where they

were let in to sleep free, it was still worse. There was no need to ask questions there, because it was evident that they were all people who had sunk to the lowest depths, and the mass of poverty and degradation one beheld excited nothing but horror and disgust.

I looked at my father's face and saw written on it all that I felt myself, but in addition it wore a look of suffering and repressed inward struggle; this look made a deep impression on me which I have never forgotten. I felt that he wanted to run away as fast as he could, just as I did, but I also felt that the reason he could not do so was because there was nowhere to run to; wherever he went the impression of what he had seen would remain with him and continue to torment him just the same, or even more. And this was indeed the fact.

This is how he describes what he felt in his pamphlet "Then What Must We Do?" (1886):

Town life, which had always been strange and unnatural to me, became so repulsive that all the pleasures of luxury which had seemed pleasures to me before became a torment. And search as I might in my heart for any justification of our life, however small, I could not look at our own or anybody else's drawing-room, or a clean well-spread dining-table, or a carriage with well-fed coachman and horses, or shops, or theaters, or parties, without a feeling of profound irritation. I could not help seeing side by side with it the cold, hungry, degraded inhabitants of Lyápin

House. And I could not rid myself of the idea that those two things were connected and that the one was the result of the other. I remember that, as this guilty feeling had presented itself to my mind at the first moment, so it continued with me.

. . . . . .

That same winter my father made the acquaintance of two interesting people in Moscow with whom he became very intimate, namely Vladímir Fyódorovitch Orlóf and Nikolái Fyódorovitch Fyódorof.

The former I do not remember very much of; but Fyódorof, former Librarian of the Moscow Rumyántsef Museum, I can see before my eyes at this minute, as if he were alive. He was a little lean old man of middle height, always badly dressed, and extraordinarily quiet and retiring. Round his neck, instead of a collar, he wore a sort of gray check comforter, and winter and summer he always had on the same old short overcoat. His face had an expression that one can never forget. He had the liveliest intelligent, penetrating eyes, and was at the same time all alight with inward goodness, amounting to childish naïveté. If there are such things as saints they must be just like him.

Nikolái Fyódorovitch was not only constitutionally incapable of doing harm to any one; I think he was himself entirely proof against being harmed by other people's ill-will, because he simply did not un-

derstand it. He was said to live in a garret, like a real ascetic, sleeping on the bare boards, living on scraps, and giving all his money away to the poor. As far as I remember he never argued with my father, and what was still more remarkable, my father, who was always vehement and impetuous in conversation, used to listen to Nikolái Fyódorovitch with a most attentive air, and never lost his temper with him.

But it was a very different case with Vladímir Solovyóf.[5] At one time he used to visit my father pretty often, and I cannot remember any occasion when their meetings ended without the most desperate disputes. Every time they met they made up their minds not to lose their tempers, and it always ended in the same way. We would have a party of visitors taking tea in the evening, there would be gay and lively conversation, Solovyóf cracking jokes, everybody in good spirits; when suddenly and unexpectedly some abstract question would arise; my father would begin an argument, invariably directed, for some reason, at Solovyóf; Solovyóf would answer back, one word led to another, until in the end both jumped up from their seats and a long and furious discussion ensued. Solovyóf's tall thin figure with the beautiful waving locks swung to and

[5] A well-known philosopher and writer on public affairs. Son of the famous historian; born 1853. An idealist and hermit, he died of overwork and self-neglect in 1900.

fro like a pendulum about the room; my father got excited, they raised their voices, and till the end of the evening it was impossible to get them apart.

When the party broke up, my father would go out into the hall to see the visitors off; and as he said good-by to Solovyóf, would hold his hand in his, look him in the eyes with a guilty smile, and ask him to forgive him for getting so heated. And so it was every time.

Solovyóf as a thinker never meant very much to my father, and he soon lost all interest in him. My father looked on him merely as a "brainy" man, and called him a "dean's son."

"There are many such," he said. "A 'dean's son' is a man who lives exclusively on what he can get from books. He reads masses of books and makes inferences from what he has read. But he is entirely wanting in the most important thing of all —what he brings to them himself. There are plenty of clever people among the 'dean's sons'—like Strakhof for instance; he was a very clever man indeed, and if he had thought things out in his own head he would have been a great man; but that was where his misfortune lay, that he was a 'dean's son', too."

I heard my father give this definition many years after the death of both the people he mentioned.

CHAPTER XIX

MANUAL LABOR. BOOT-MAKING. HAY-MAKING.

IN 1881 my father wrote to our former tutor V. I. Alexéyef: "I am now convinced that the only means to show the way is by life itself, the example of life. The influence of example is very slow, very indefinite—in the sense that I do not see how you can tell whom it influences—and very difficult. But it is the only thing that gives the necessary impulse.

"The proof-by-example of the possibility of a Christian life, that is of a reasonable and happy life under all possible circumstances, is the one thing that can affect people, and the one thing that you and I must achieve; so let us help each other to achieve it."

"The example of life," "a reasonable and happy life under all possible circumstances": this was the only possible solution of the complicated questions which beset my father at that time, and this was the line along which he directed his own conduct till the fatal autumn of 1910.

In spite of the immense mental labor which swallowed up all his energies, my father numbered him-

self among the idlers and parasites who live on the back of the working-classes, and in order to justify in his own eyes, to some extent at any rate, what he called his indolence, he took to manual labor, and from that time forth he never gave it up again till he was too weak to labor any more.

In a letter to N. N. Gay, of July, 1892, he says: "You cannot imagine how disgusted, ashamed, and melancholy I feel, now they are getting in the harvest, to be living in the vile and abominable conditions in which I do. Especially when I think of former years."

My father was always fond of manual labor as a useful and healthy form of exercise, and as a means of communion with Nature. But his idea of labor as a religious duty became especially marked from the beginning of the eighties. I remember how the first winter of our life in Moscow he used to go out beyond the Moscow River, somewhere in the Sparrow Hills, and saw wood with the *muzhíks*. He used to come home tired out, covered with sweat, and full of new impressions of the healthy life of labor, and tell us at dinner about how the sawyers worked, how long a spell they did at a time and how much they got for it; and of course he always contrasted their laborious life and their poverty with our luxury and aristocratic idleness.

In order to be able to work at home and turn the

CORN GROWN AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

HARVESTING AT YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

long winter evenings to account, he began to learn bootmaking. He got a bootmaker from somewhere —a modest black-bearded man, a typical serious working-man—bought a set of implements and materials, and set up a bench in the little room that he had next to his study. In the window, beside the bench, a curious little iron stove, heated by a kerosene lamp, was put up, for the double purpose of warming the room and ventilating it. I remember that in spite of this stove, of which he was extremely proud, it was always very stuffy in his tiny low-roofed workshop and smelt of leather and tobacco.

The shoemaker used to come at fixed hours; master and pupil sat side by side on low stools and set to work, splicing bristles, closing, hammering the backs into shape, pinning the out-soles, building up the heel-lifts, and so on.[1] My father, who was always enthusiastic and thorough, insisted on doing everything himself, and never gave in until he had succeeded in making his work just like his teacher's. He sat huddled up over his bench, carefully waxing his thread, or splicing his bristle, breaking it, starting afresh, groaning with the effort, and, pupil-like, triumphant at every success.

[1] The bristles are used in bootmaking as needles to pass through crooked holes: they are split at the thick end and spliced with the ends of the waxed thread. "Closing" is sewing the seams of the "upper," joining the "quarter" to the "vamp" or "golosh."

"Allow me, Lyof Nikoláyevitch, I 'll do it," the shoemaker would say, seeing my father's unavailing efforts.

"No, no, I 'll do it myself. You do your work, and I 'll do mine; it 's the only way to learn."

During the lessons people often came to see my father, and sometimes there was such a crowd of interested spectators that there was no room to turn round. I was fond of being with him too, and often spent whole evenings there.

I remember how Prince Obolénski, my cousin Elizaveta Valerianovna's husband, came in one day. My father had just learnt how to drive the pins into the sole. He was sitting, holding a boot upside down between his knees and diligently hammering wooden pegs into the new red sole. Some of them went wrong, but most of them were driven in successfully.

"Look, is n't that grand?" said my father, exultantly, holding out his work for the visitor to see.

"It does n't seem so very difficult," said Obolénski, half in joke.

"Well, you try!"

"Right you are!"

"Very good; but on one condition; every peg you drive in I 'll pay you a rouble, and every one you break you 'll pay me ten copecks.[2] Agreed?"

[2] There are 100 copecks or farthings to a rouble.

Obolénski took the boot, awl, and hammer, and broke eight pegs one after the other; then he laughed with his good-humored laugh and amid general hilarity paid up eighty copecks which went to the shoemaker.

I remember another occasion, connected with my only reminiscence of the poet Polónski. We were sitting at the bench working one night—I say 'we,' because I also learnt the business, and was not at all a bad hand at bootmaking at one time—when the footman, Sergéi Petróvitch, came and said that a Mr. Potogónski would like to see the Count.

"Who on earth is Potogónski? I don't know any one of the name. Show him up," said my father.

At least five minutes elapsed. We had already forgotten about Potogónski, when suddenly we heard what sounded like strange uneven wooden footsteps in the passage. The door opened and a tall gray-headed man on crutches appeared. Looking up at the visitor and recognizing him at once, my father jumped up and kissed him.

"Good Heavens! So it 's you, Yákof Petróvitch! For Heaven's sake forgive me for having made you come up all these stairs. If I had known I would have come down, but Sergéi said 'Potogónski.' I never imagined for a moment it could be you. What will you take?"

"Well, under the circumstances, I 'll take a pot o'

potogónnoye;[3] I should enjoy a little tea," laughed Polónski, panting from his exertions and seating himself on the sofa.

As a matter of fact, in order to get to my father's study, the poor lame old gentleman had to climb up two flights of stairs, go through the *zala*, down some very steep steps, and then along a dimly lighted passage full of steps and corners. Neither before nor after that occasion did I ever see Polónski, and I remember very little about this visit; for some reason or other I soon left the room and was not present during his conversation with my father.

My father's other instructor in shoemaking was our own man Pável Arbúzof, son of Márya Afanásyevna the nurse, and brother of Sergéi the footman. My father worked with him one time at Yásnaya Polyána.

In the summer my father worked in the fields. If he heard of the poverty and distress of any widow or sick old man,[4] he would undertake to work on their behalf and plowed, reaped and carried their corn for them.

When he first began, he was entirely alone in these occupations; no one took any interest in them and most of the family looked on his field-work as a

[3] *Potogónnoye* means "sudorific."

[4] That is, heads of households unable to take advantage of their share in the communal fields of the village.

PACKING APPLES ON TOLSTOY'S ESTATE

SORTING THE FRUIT

whim, and felt rather sorry that he should waste his valuable energies on such heavy and unproductive labor. Although my father had become much gentler by this time, lost his temper less in argument, was less prone to find fault with others, and was sometimes gay and sociable as he used to be in the old days, still we all felt the harshness of the discord between *our* life, with its croquet and visitors and endless round of amusements, and my father's, with its successive spells of strenuous work, in his study and in the fields, at his writing-table and at the plow-tail.

The first member of the family who allied herself with my father was my sister Masha, who is now dead.[5]

In 1885 she was fifteen years old. She was a thin, fair girl, lissom and rather tall, resembling my mother in figure, but taking more after my father in features, with the same strongly marked cheek-bones and with bright blue eyes. Quiet and retiring in disposition, she always had a certain air of being, as it were, rather "put upon." She felt for my father's solitude, and was the first of the whole family to draw away from the society of those of her own age and unobtrusively but firmly and definitely go over to my father's side.

Always a champion of the downtrodden and un-

[5] She married Prince N. L. Obolénski in 1897 and died in 1906.

fortunate, Masha threw herself whole-heartedly into the interests of the poor of the village and, whenever she could, helped them with such little physical strength as she had, and above all with her great responsive heart. There were no doctors about the house as yet at that time, and all the sick people of Yásnaya Polyána, and often of the neighboring villages, came to Masha for assistance.[6]

She often used to go about from house to house visiting her patients, and the peasants of our village remember her with lively gratitude, while the women are still firmly convinced that Márya Lvóvna "knew," and could always tell without fail whether a patient would recover or not.

That same summer a young Jew named F. appeared at Yásnaya Polyána; at that time he was a sincere disciple of my father's, a disinterested and convinced idealist. He lived in the village and worked for the peasants, without demanding any payment for his work beyond the simplest and most Spartan fare, and he dreamed of founding a society with community of goods like the early Christians. In order to avoid trouble with the authorities he had himself christened into the Russian Church.

At one time F. was carried away to such an extent

[6] After Tolstoy's illness in the Crimea a doctor always lived in the house: Tolstoy stipulated that if a doctor were kept for him he must also attend the *muzhiks* of the neighborhood.—Maude's "Life of Tolstoy."

by Christian ideas, that he astonished every one by his thoroughgoingness, and had a certain influence even among the villagers, especially among the younger ones. He had a wife, a pretty Jewess called Rebecca, and a baby, and they lived in a cottage and literally starved. F. used to bring them the crusts of bread that he got for his labor, and very often, when he worked for very poor peasants, he got nothing at all and went hungry too. Rebecca went about the village and sometimes about our demesne, dressed in rags, and got food for herself and her little boy wherever she could by begging. At last she insisted on her husband demanding at least a pipkin of milk every day for the child in return for his work. But he did not think it right even to do that, and it ended in his wife, who could no longer bear such an existence, leaving him and going away.

One evening F. came in to see my father and asked him to read something aloud to him. While my father was reading F. suddenly turned pale and fell fainting on the floor. It appeared that he had been working all day without having anything to eat, and had fainted from hunger. This event had an overwhelming effect on my father, and he could never forget it. "We well-fed people stuff ourselves and do no work, while this man has been working the whole day and fainted from sheer hunger." What a vivid and terrible contrast!

Another time, in the autumn, a passing Gipsy got F. to give him his only tunic, and when winter approached, F. had absolutely nothing to wear but a hempen shirt. Of course there was a great deal of talk about it; it ended in people taking pity on him, and by the winter-time he was fitted out with a better wardrobe than he had when he came.

I arrived at Yásnaya Polyána, after my examination, at the beginning of June that year, when all the family was assembled at home, and our summer life was following its customary beaten track. I was nineteen years old, looked on myself as already engaged to my present wife, and dreamed of getting married and beginning a new life with her, in accordance with my father's views. I did not know what to do with my superfluous energy and went and told my father that I wanted to do some outdoor work, and asked him to tell me what to do.

"Good! I will. Go to Zhárova's; her husband left her last winter to go and earn money in town and has not come back again; she has a struggle to get along, with her children on her hands, and has no one to plow her strips for her. Get a wooden plow,[7] harness Mórdvin and go and plow for her; it's just the moment for turning over the fallow."

[7] *Sokhá,* the short-tailed, shafted, wooden plow used by the peasants; light enough to be swung up on the side of a horse when going to and returning from the fields.

VILLAGE NEAR YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA

HAY-MAKING ON TOLSTOY'S ESTATE

I did as he told me, and soon had several strips at the back of the village, near the lake, plowed up. I well remember the sensation of doing useful work, which was new to me, and how pleasant and tranquilizing it was. You feel like a horse harnessed to the plow you are following, turning up furrow after furrow; you think your leisurely thoughts, you keep watching the shining ribbon of earth, the endless band sliding off the mold-board, the fat white cock-chafer grubs wriggling helplessly in the fresh furrow, the rooks which follow the track of the plow, without paying you the slightest attention, picking up what they can find; and you never notice you are tired till dinner-time comes, or the twilight drives you home again. Then you turn your plow upside down, tie it up to the carriers, get up sideways on your horse and ride home, with your legs jogging against the shafts, meditating pleasantly on the coming food and rest.

Very often, when I had taken my horse back to the stable, without waiting for the family meal, I would run straight into the outdoor servants' hall, where they were dining on the bare table, seat myself in a corner between a coachman and a laundress, and sup up cold quass with pounded onion and potatoes, or heavily salted watery crumb-broth [8] with a dash of green oil, in a round wooden spoon.

[8] *Murtsóvka,* black bread crumbled in quass or water.

By St. Peter's Day [9] we had begun to mow the hay. As a rule the Yásnaya peasants got in the hay from our fields for payment in kind, on a sharing arrangement. Before the hay-making began they used to form themselves into gangs [10] of several families apiece, and each gang had its own pieces to mow and carry, at the rate of a third share of the hay, or two-fifths, for payment, according to the quality of the grass.

Our gang consisted of two peasants,—the tall Vasíli Mikhéyef and the long-nosed dwarfish Ósip Makárof—my father, F. the Jew, and myself. We undertook to mow the new garden beyond the avenues, and the water-meadow by the Vorónka. I mowed for the benefit of Zhárova again, and my father and F. for some one else.

It was a very hot summer and we had to get the hay carried quickly, because the rye [11] would soon be ripe, and the peasants had no time to spare. The grass in the fields had been burnt up by the sun and was as dry and tough as wire. It was only very early in the morning when the dew was on it that it

[9] June 29th, i. e., July 11th, new style.

[10] *Artéls.* Whatever work they have in hand Russians always form themselves into disciplined gangs and work for common profit. In their more highly developed form, in the towns, the Artéls are big organizations or Guilds for each trade, resembling our Trade Unions, except that they are organized for the common liability as well as the common advantage of the members.

[11] That is, the "winter rye," sown the previous autumn.

lay at all lightly on the scythe, and we had to get up at dawn in order to get the task we had set ourselves overnight done in time. Our best mower, Vasíli, went in front, then came Ósip, my father, F., and myself. My father mowed well and never fell behind, though he sweated copiously and evidently got tired. For some reason or other, when he saw me at it, he declared that I mowed like a carpenter; there was something about me in the turn of the waist and the sweep of the scythe that suggested a carpenter to him. When the sun was high we tedded the hay and gathered it into cocks, and when the evening dew fell, went out again with our scythes and mowed till night.

Following our example, another gang was formed like ours, a big and merry one this, which my brothers Sergéi and Lyof joined, besides the governess's [12] son, Alcide, a boy of the same age as myself, a capital fellow, whom the peasants knew as Aldakím Aldakímovitch.

My sister Masha was in our gang, while Tánya and my two cousins, Masha and Vera Kuzmínski, were in the other.

Our gang was very serious and solemn: theirs was frivolous and gay. On Sundays and holidays, and sometimes on ordinary working-days, the other gang sold their haycocks for drinks; they had endless songs

[12] Mme. Seuron, the French lady.

and amusement; while we, "the saints," behaved ourselves with great gravity, and had, it must be confessed, rather a dull time of it. I must also confess that sometimes when they sold a cock my brother Lyof, who did not drink vodka, kept his share of it for me, and I enjoyed playing traitor to my gang every now and then and drinking his glass. This did not prevent me from looking down on their gang, all the more as their merry-making ended in disaster. The drunken *muzhíks* got fighting and Semyón Rezunóf, the head of the gang, broke his father Sergéi's arm.

The summer I am telling about was remarkable for the fact that the passion for outdoor work infected every one staying in the house at Yásnaya Polyána. Even my mother used to come out to the hay-fields in a *sarafán* with a rake, and my uncle, an oldish man occupying a dignified official position at the time, mowed so vigorously that his hands were covered with huge blisters. Of course very few of those who worked shared my father's convictions or had any theoretical ideas about manual labor, but it so happened that summer that the whole household went in for outdoor work and every one took an interest in it, some on its merits, and some merely as a pleasant and healthy form of athletics.

We used to have periodical visits about that time from Mr. ——, one of my father's younger disciples. He came when field operations were in full swing.

After breakfast the whole company collected and we all went to the stables where our tools were kept. I was just then helping my father to build a coach-house in the village for one of the villagers; F. the Jew was thatching somebody's cottage; while my sisters were busy binding rye-sheaves. Every one took the tools he needed; I and my father took saws and axes;[13] F. took a pitchfork, my sisters took rakes, and we set out.

Mr. —— was going with my father and me. My sister Tánya, who was always lively and fond of fun, seeing that Mr. —— was setting out with empty hands, turned to him, calling him by his Christian name and patronymic.

"And where are you going, ——?"

"To the villa-a-age."

"What for?"

"To he-e-elp."

"Why, how are you going to help? You have n't got any tools. Here, take a rake; it 'll do to hand them up the straw." [14]

"Oh, I shall help them with advi-i-ice," said Mr. ——, speaking, as he always did, with a drawl like an Englishman, quite unaware of Tánya's irony, and how ridiculous and useless he would be with his

[13] Russian workmen use an axe for all sorts of work; an axe serves them for bradawl, chisel, and hammer.

[14] The straw, i. e., for caulking the seams between the logs.

advice in "the villa-a-age," where everybody has to work hard, and where people dressed up in baggy English knickerbockers and Norfolk jackets are merely in the way and interfere with other people's work.

I record this incident with regret, as a characteristic sample of the type of the "Tolstoyites," of whom we hear so much. How many such "advisers" have I seen in my time! How many of them turned up at Yásnaya Polyána! And among them all how few really convinced and sincere believers! Many of them turned abruptly aside during my father's lifetime, while others still stalk vaingloriously in his shadow and only do harm to his memory. My father had good reason for saying that the "Tolstoyites" were to him the most incomprehensible sect and the furthest removed from his way of thinking that he had ever come across.

"I shall soon be dead," he sadly predicted, "and people will say that Tolstoy taught men to plow and reap and make boots; while the chief thing that I have been trying so hard to say all my life, the thing I believe in, the most important of all, they will forget."

CHAPTER XX

MY FATHER AS A FATHER

AT this point I will turn back and try to trace the influence which my father had on my upbringing, and I will recall, as well as I can, the impressions that he left on my mind in my childhood, and later in the melancholy days of my early manhood, which happened to coincide with the radical change in his whole philosophy of life.

I have already spoken of the "Anke Pie" which my mother brought to Yásnaya Polyána from the Behrs family. In making my mother bear all the responsibility for that "pie," I have done her an injustice; for my father, at the time of his marriage, had his own "Anke pie" too, though I dare say he had grown too used to it to notice it. His "pie" was that ancient tradition of life at Yásnaya Polyána which he found when he came into the world, and which he afterwards dreamed of restoring.

In 1852, tired of life in the Caucasus and mindful of his old home at Yásnaya Polyána, he writes to his aunt, Tatyána Alexándrovna,[1] describing "the happiness which awaits me."

[1] T. A. Yergólskaya, a distant relative, who took the chief part in bringing him up after his mother's death.

This is how I picture it to myself: After some years, I shall find myself, neither very young nor very old, back at Yásnaya Polyána again: my affairs will all be in order; I shall have no anxieties for the future, and no troubles in the present. You also will be living at Yásnaya. You will be getting a little old, but you will still be healthy and vigorous. We shall lead the life we led in the old days: I shall work in the mornings, but we shall meet and see each other almost all day.

We shall dine together in the evening. I shall read you something that interests you. Then we shall talk; I shall tell you about my life in the Caucasus; you will give me reminiscences of my father and mother; you will tell me some of those "terrible stories" to which we used to listen in the old days with frightened eyes and open mouths. We shall talk about the people that we loved and who are no more. You will cry, and I shall cry too; but our tears will be refreshing, tranquilizing tears. We shall talk about my brothers who will visit us from time to time, and about dear Masha,[2] who will also spend several months every year at Yásnaya, which she loves so, with all her children. We shall have no acquaintances; no one will come in to bore us with gossip. It is a wonderful dream. But that is not all that I let myself dream of. I shall be married. My wife will be gentle, kind, and affectionate; she will love you as I do; we shall have children who will call you Granny; you will live in the big house, in the room on the top floor where my grandmother lived before.[3] The whole house will be run on the same lines

[2] My father's sister.—I. T. The nun.

[3] Pelagéya Nikoláyevna, Nikolái Ilyítch's mother.—I. T. I. e., Tolstoy's father's mother.

TOLSTOY'S FIVE SONS

From left to right: Sergéi, Ilyá, Lyof, Andréi, and Mikháil

as it was in my father's time, and we shall begin the same life over again, but with a change of rôles. You will take my grandmother's place, but you will be better still than she was; I shall take my father's place, though I can never hope to be worthy of the honor. My wife will take my mother's place, and the children ours. Masha will fill the part of both my aunts,[4] except for their sorrow; and there will even be Gasha[5] there to take the place of Praskóvya Ilyínitchna. The only thing lacking will be some one to take the part you played in the life of our family. We shall never find such a noble and loving heart as yours. There is no one to succeed you.

There will be three fresh faces that will appear among us from time to time, namely, my brothers; especially one who will often be with us, Nikólenka, who will be an old bachelor, bald, retired, always the same kindly noble fellow. I imagine him telling the children stories of his own composition, as of old; the children kissing his grubby hands, which will still be grubby, but worthy to be kissed nevertheless. I see him playing with them; my wife bustling about to prepare him his favorite dish; him and myself going over our reminiscences of the old long-ago days; you sitting in your accustomed place listening to us with interest. You will still call us by the old names of Lyovótchka and Nikólenka in spite of our age and you will scold me for eating my food with my fingers, and him for not having washed his hands.

If I were made Emperor of Russia, if I were given Peru for my own, in short, if a fairy came with her wand and

[4] Pelagéya Ilyínitchna Yushkóva and Alexandra Ilyínitchna Osten-Saken.—I. T.

[5] Agáfya Mikháilovna.—I. T.

asked me what I wanted, I should lay my hand on my heart and answer that I wanted these dreams to become realities.

Just ten years after this letter my father married and almost all his dreams were realized, exactly as he had designed. Only the big house with his grandmother's room was missing, and his brother Nikólenka with the dirty hands, for he died two years before, in 1860. In his family life my father witnessed a repetition of the life of his parents, and in us children he sought to find a repetition of himself and his brothers.

. . . . . .

This was the atmosphere in which we were brought up and continued to live till the middle of the seventies. We were educated as regular "gentlefolk," proud of our social position and holding aloof from all the outer world. Everything that was not us was below us, and therefore unworthy of imitation.

When our neighbor Alexander Nikoláyevitch Bíbikof and his son Nikólenka were asked to our Christmas tree, we used to take note of everything that Nikólenka did that was n't "the thing," and aftwards used "Nikólenka Bíbikof" as a term of abuse among ourselves, considering that there was nobody in the world so stupid and contemptible as he was. And we regarded Nikólenka in this light because we could see that papa regarded his father in the same

way. Alexander Nikoláyevitch was very respectful towards papa and would never think of coming to call without four horses to his carriage; while papa did not go in for such ceremony and used to go over to Telyátinka in an ordinary cart without a coachman, or sometimes just on horseback. My father told me that Bíbikof always considered it necessary to talk on intellectual subjects with him, and often put him scientific questions, such as "Why does the sun shine?"

The chief constable of the hundred was so respectful that he never took the liberty of driving right up to the house. When he got within a mile he used to tie up his bell,[6] and when he got within a hundred yards he used to stop his horses in the avenue and come on to the house on foot. He was received in the hall and never shaken hands with.

We also looked down on the village children. I never took any interest in them till I found they could teach me things I knew nothing of and was forbidden to know. I was about ten years old then. We used to go down to the village to toboggan on footstools in the snow, and struck up a friendship with the peasants' children; but papa soon discovered the interest we took in them and put a stop to it.

[6] The bell is a bell like a dinner bell hung in the *dugá* or wooden arch which rises from the shafts over the horse's neck. The police officer in question is head of a Stan, which is a division of the District, which is a division of the Province.

And so we grew up, surrounded on every side by a stone wall of English nurses, and French, German, and Russian tutors; and in these surroundings our parents had no difficulty in keeping an eye on all we did, and directing our life the way they wanted it to go, especially as they were both quite of one mind about our upbringing and their views had as yet shown no tendency to diverge.

Besides certain subjects which my father undertook to teach us himself, he paid particular attention to our physical development, to gymnastics and all kinds of athletics tending to develop courage and self-reliance. At one period he used to take us all every day to a place in one of the avenues where there was an outdoor gymnasium; and we all had to go through a number of difficult exercises in turn on the trapeze and rings and parallel bars.

The most difficult of all was an exercise on the trapeze where you had to pass through between your hands with your back to the bar; this exercise was known as "Mikháil Ivánovitch." Papa and Monsieur Rey could do it, but it was difficult for us boys and we had a lot of trouble before we could manage it. Seryózha achieved it first, and I was a bad second.

When we were going out for a walk or a ride papa never waited for those who were late, and when I lagged behind and cried he used to mimic me and say,

TOLSTOY AND HIS GRANDCHILDREN

"Nobody waits for me!" and I used to bellow louder than ever and get perfectly furious; but I caught them up all the same.

The word "milksop" was a favorite word of abuse with us and there was nothing more humiliating in the world than for one of us to be called a milksop by my father. I remember how my grandmother Pelagéya Ilyínitchna was once trimming a lamp and took the hot chimney in her hands. It burnt her so badly that it raised blisters on her fingers, but she did not drop the chimney; she put it carefully down on the table. Papa was a witness of this, and whenever he had occasion to blame any of us for cowardice afterwards he used to recall the incident and hold it up before us as an example. "There 's pluck for you! Your grandmother had a perfect right to drop the chimney on the floor: it only cost a penny, and your granny can earn five times as much as that in a day by her knitting alone; but still she did n't. She burnt her fingers, but she did n't drop it. *You 'd* have dropped it. . . . And I dare say I should too!" he added, quite enthusiastic at her courage.

My father hardly ever *made* us do anything; but it always somehow came about that of our own initiative we did exactly what he wanted us to. My mother often scolded us and punished us; but when my father wanted to make us do something he merely

looked us hard in the eyes, and we understood: his look was far more effective than any command.

Here is an illustration of the difference between my father's method and my mother's. Supposing you wanted a sixpence for something. If you went to my mother she would ask a lot of questions about what it was for, and tell you you were very naughty, and occasionally refuse. If you went to my father he would ask no questions, would merely look you in the eyes and say: "You 'll find one on the table!" But however much I wanted that sixpence I never used to go and get it from my father but always preferred to go and get it out of my mother.

To please my father, my brother Seryózha spent a whole winter learning Latin, and when he could read it, went and showed my father as a surprise.

My father's great power as an educator lay in this, that it was as impossible to conceal anything from him as from one's own conscience. He knew everything, and to deceive him was just like deceiving oneself: it was nearly impossible and quite useless.

My father's influence over me was very vividly displayed in the question of my marriage and in my relations with women before my marriage.

Sometimes the most trifling incident or the most casual word said at the right moment leaves a deep impression and influences the whole of a man's after-life. So it was with me.

One morning I was running down the long straight staircase at home at Yásnaya taking two steps at a time and, according to custom, jumping down the last few steps with a dashing acrobatic jump. I was sixteen at the time and pretty strong, and the jump was a very fine performance. At that moment my father happened to be coming across the hall towards the foot of the staircase. When he saw me flying through the air he stopped at the bottom and spread out his arms to catch me in case I missed my footing and fell. I sank down agilely on my heels, straightened myself up and said good-morning.

"What an athletic young chap you are!" he said, smiling and evidently admiring my boyish vigor. "A young fellow like you would have been married long since among the villagers; and here you are not knowing what to do with all your energy."

I did not say anything at the time, but those words of his produced an immense impression on me. What struck me most was not the implied reproach for my idleness, but the new idea that I was really so grown up that it was "time to marry me." I knew that my father felt very earnestly about the chastity of young people; I knew how much strength he laid on purity; and an early marriage seemed to me the best solution of the difficult question which must harass every thoughtful boy when he attains to man's estate. I do not for a moment suppose that when he

uttered those words, my father foresaw the effect they would have on me; but they were undoubtedly spoken from the bottom of his heart and that is why they left such a deep impression behind them. I not only understood them in their literal import; I felt all the deep significance of what was left unsaid.

. . . . . .

Two or three years later, when I was eighteen and we were living in Moscow, I fell in love with a young lady I knew,—she is now my wife,—and went almost every Saturday to her father's house. My father knew but said nothing. One day when he was going out for a walk I asked if I might come with him. As I very seldom went for walks with him in Moscow he guessed that I wanted to have a serious talk with him about something, and after walking some distance in silence, evidently feeling that I was shy about it and did not like to break the ice, he suddenly began.

"You seem to go pretty often to the F——s'."

I said that I was very fond of the eldest daughter.

"What do you want? To marry her?"

"Yes."

"Is she a good girl? . . . Well, mind you don't make a mistake; and don't be false to her," he said with a curious gentleness and thoughtfulness.

I left him at once and ran back home, delighted, along the Arbát. I was glad that I had told him the

TOLSTOY, HIS SON LYOF, AND THE SON OF LYOF

truth; and his affectionate and cautious way of taking it strengthened my affection both for him to whom I was boundlessly grateful for his depth of feeling; and for her, whom I loved still more warmly from that moment, and to whom I resolved still more fervently never to be untrue.

My father's tactfulness towards us amounted almost to timidity. There were certain questions which he could never bring himself to touch on for fear of causing us pain.

I shall never forget how once in Moscow I found him sitting writing at the table in my room, when I dashed in suddenly to change my clothes. My bed stood behind a screen which hid him from me.

When he heard my footsteps he said without looking round:

"Is that you, Ilyá?"

"Yes, it 's me."

"Are you alone? Shut the door. . . . There 's no one to hear us and we can't see each other, so we shall not feel ashamed. Tell me, did you ever have anything to do with women?"

When I said No, I suddenly heard him break out sobbing, like a little child.

I sobbed and cried too, and for a long time we stayed weeping tears of joy with the screen between us, and we were neither of us ashamed, but both so joyful, that I look on that moment as one of the hap-

piest in my whole life. No arguments or homilies could ever have effected what the emotion I experienced at that moment did. Such tears as those shed by a father of sixty can never be forgotten even in moments of the strongest temptation.

. . . . . .

Between the ages of sixteen and twenty, my father watched my inner development most attentively, noted all my doubts and hesitations, encouraged me in my good impulses, and often found fault with me for inconsistency. I still have some of his letters written at that time. The first, only a postcard, was written from Yásnaya, when he had a bad leg,[7] and I and my brothers Seryózha and Lyólya were living in Moscow with Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Gay, the artist's son.

You get letters from here every day and of course you all know all about me. I write myself just "to make sure." General condition good. If anything to complain of it 's bad nights, in consequence of which my head is unclear and I cannot work. I lie and listen to women talking; am so lapped in femininity I begin to talk of myself as "she." [8] Am peaceful in my mind; sometimes a little anxious about some of you, about your spiritual welfare, but do not allow myself to worry, and wait and rejoice in the forward course of life. As long as you don't undertake

[7] This was in 1886. Tolstoy had erysipelas from a neglected sore on his leg. Maude's "Life."

[8] Literally: "I begin to say *Ya spalá,* I slept," i. e., in the feminine, instead of *ya spál,* in the masculine.

too much, and live without doing evil, all will be well. I kiss you all including Kóletchka.[9]

The next two letters both belong to the same period as the first:

I had just written you, my dear friend Ilyá, a letter that was true to my own feelings but, I am afraid, unjust, and I am not sending it. I said unpleasant things in it, but I have no right to do so. I do not know you as I should like to and as I ought to know you. That is my fault, and I wish to remedy it. I know much in you that I do not like, but I do not know everything. As for your proposed journey home, I think that in your position as a student—not only student of a Gymnase, but at the age of study—it is better to gad about as little as possible; moreover, all useless expenditure of money that you can easily refrain from is immoral in my opinion, and in yours too if you only consider it. If you come, I shall be glad for my own sake, so long as you are not inseparable from G.

Do as you think best. But you must work, both with your head, thinking and reading, and with your heart, i.e., find out for yourself what is really good and what is bad although it seems to be good. I kiss you. L. T.

Dear friend Ilyá,

There is always somebody or something that prevents me from answering your two letters, which are important and dear to me, especially the last. First it was Buturlín, then bad health, insomnia, then the arrival of D., the friend of H. that I wrote you about. He is sitting at tea talking to the ladies, neither understanding the other; so I left them,

[9] Nikolái Gay.

and want to write what little I can find time to, of all that I have been thinking about you.

Even supposing that S. A. demands too much of you,[10] there is no harm in waiting; especially from the point of view of fortifying your opinions, your faith. That is the one important thing. If you don't, it is a fearful disaster to put off from one shore and not reach the other.

The one shore is a good and honest life, for your own delight and the profit of others. But there is a bad life too, a life so sugared, so common to all, that if you follow it you do not notice that it is a bad life, and suffer only in your conscience, if you have one; but if you leave it and do not reach the real shore, you will be made miserable by solitude and by the reproach of having deserted your fellows, and you will be ashamed. In short, I want to say that it is out of the question to want to be *rather* good; it is out of the question to jump into the water unless you know how to swim. One must be sincere and wish to be good with all one's might. Do you feel this in you? The drift of what I say is that we all know what Princess María Alexéyevna's[11] verdict about your marriage would be: that if young people marry without a sufficient fortune it means children, poverty, getting tired of each other in a year or two, in ten years, quarrels, want—hell. And in all this Princess María Alexéyevna is perfectly right and plays the true prophet, unless the young people who are getting

[10] I had written to my father that my fiancée's mother would not let me marry for two years.—I. T.

[11] My father took Griboyédof's Princess María Alexéyevna as a type.—I. T. The allusion is to the last words of Griboyédof's famous comedy, "The Misfortune of Cleverness," 1824. "What will Princess Márya Alexévna say?" She is merely Mrs. Grundy, not a character in the play.

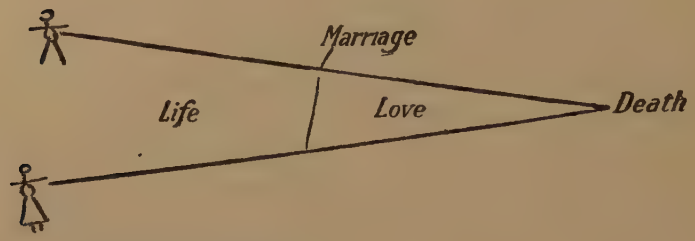
married have another purpose, their one and only one, unknown to Princess María Alexéyevna, and that not a brainish purpose, not one recognized by the intellect, but one that gives life its color and the attainment of which is more moving than any other. If you have this, good; marry at once, and give the lie to Princess María Alexéyevna. If not, it is a hundred to one that your marriage will lead to nothing but misery. I am speaking to you from the bottom of my heart. Receive my words into the bottom of yours and weigh them well. Besides love for you as a son, I have love for you also as a man standing at the cross-ways. I kiss you and Lyólya and Kóletchka and Seryózha, if he is back. We are all alive and well.

The following letter belongs to the same period:

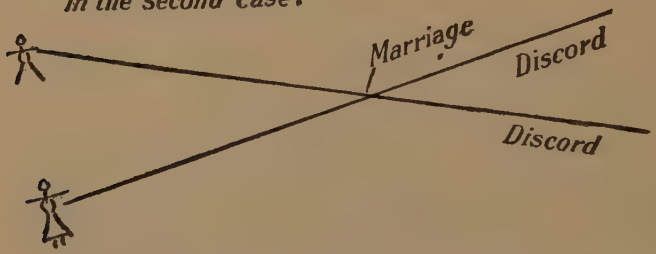
Your letter to Tánya has arrived, my dear friend Ilyá, and I see that you are still advancing towards that purpose which you set up for yourself; and I want to write to you and to her—for no doubt you tell her everything—what I think about it. Well, I think about it a great deal, with joy and with fear, mixed. This is what I think. If one marries in order to enjoy oneself more, no good will ever come of it. To set up as one's main object, ousting everything else, marriage, union with the being you love, is a great mistake. And an obvious one, if you think about it. Object, marriage. Well, you marry; and what then? If you had no other object in life before your marriage, it will be twice as fearfully hard, almost impossible, to find one. In fact you may be sure, if you had no common purpose before your marriage, nothing can bring you together, you will keep getting further apart. Marriage can never bring happiness unless those who marry have a common purpose.

Two people meet on the road and say, "Let's walk together." Let them; they will go hand in hand; but not if they hold out their hands to each other and both turn off the road.

In the first case it will be like this:



In the second case:



The reason of this is that the idea shared by many that life is a vale of tears is just as false as the idea, shared by the great majority, the idea to which youth and health and riches incline you, that life is a place of entertainment. Life is a place of service, and in that service one has to suffer at times a good deal that is hard to bear, but more often to experience a great deal of joy. But that joy can only be real if people look upon their life as a service, and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness.

As a rule, people who are getting married completely forget this. So many joyful events await them in the future,

in wedlock and the arrival of children, that those events seem to constitute life itself. But this is a dangerous illusion.

If parents merely live from day to day begetting children, and have no purpose in life, they are only putting off the question of the purpose of life and that punishment which is allotted to people who live without knowing why; they are only putting it off and not escaping it, because they will have to bring up their children and guide their steps, but they will have nothing to guide them by. And then the parents lose their human qualities and the happiness which depends on the possession of them, and turn into mere breeding-stock. That is why I say that people who are proposing to marry because their life *seems* to them to be full must more than ever set themselves to think and make clear to their own minds what it is that each of them lives for.

And in order to make this clear you must consider your present circumstances and your past life; reckon up what you consider important and what unimportant in life; find out what you believe in; that is, what you look on as eternal and immutable truth, and what you will take for your guide in life. And not only find out, make clear to your own mind, but try to practise or to learn to practise in your daily life, because until you practise what you believe you cannot tell whether you believe it or not.

I know your faith, and that faith, or those sides of it which can be expressed in deeds, you must now, more than ever, make clear to your own mind by putting them into practice. Your faith is that your welfare consists in loving people and being loved by them. For the attainment of this end I know of three lines of action, in which I per-

petually exercise myself, in which one can never exercise oneself enough and which are especially necessary to you now.

First, in order to be able to love people and to be loved by them, one must accustom oneself to expect as little as possible from them, and that is very hard work (for if I expect much and am often disappointed, I am inclined rather to reproach them than to love them).

Second, in order to love people not in word but in deed, one must train oneself to do what benefits them. That needs still harder work, especially at your age when it is one's natural business to be studying.

Third, in order to love people and to b.l.b.t.[12] one must train oneself to gentleness, humility, the art of bearing with disagreeable people and things, the art of behaving to them so as not to offend any one, of being able to choose the least offence. And this is the hardest work of all, work that never ceases from the time you wake till the time you go to sleep, and the most joyful work of all, because day after day you rejoice in your growing success in it and receive a further reward (unperceived at first but very joyful afterwards) in being loved by others.

So I advise you, friend Ilyá, and both of you, to live and to think as sincerely as you can, because it is the only way you can discover if you are really going along the same road, and whether it is wise to join hands or not; and at the same time, if you are sincere, you must be making your future ready. Your purpose in life must not be to enjoy the delight of wedlock but, by your life, to bring more love and truth into the world. The object of marriage is to help one another in the attainment of that purpose.

[12] Be loved by them.

TOLSTOY AND ALEXÁNDRA

She was her father's last secretary

The vilest and most selfish life is the life of the people who have joined together only in order to enjoy life; and the highest vocation in the world is that of those who live in order to serve God by bringing good into the world, and who have joined together for that express purpose. Don't mistake half-measures for the real thing. Why should a man not choose the highest? Only, when you have chosen the highest, you must set your whole heart on it and not just a little. Just a little leads to nothing. There, I am tired of writing and still have much left that I wanted to say. I kiss you.

CHAPTER XXI

MY MARRIAGE. MY FATHER'S LETTERS. VÁNITCHKA. HIS DEATH.

IN February, 1888, I married and went with my bride to Yásnaya Polyána, where we established ourselves for two months in three rooms on the ground floor. In the spring I was to move to Alexander Farm, on our property "Nikólskoye" in the Tchórnski District, where I intended to build myself a house and settle. Soon after my marriage I received the following letter from my father.

How are you, my dear children? Are you alive? Are you alive in spirit? This is an important time that you are passing through. Everything is important now, every step is important; remember that: your life together is taking shape now, the life of your mutual relations, the new organism, the *homme-femme*, one being, and the relations of that compound being to all the rest of the world, to Márya Afanásyevna,[1] to Kóstyushka, etc., and to the inanimate world, to your food, your clothing, etc. Everything is new. If you want anything, want it now. And most important of all, you will now have your moods of *mauvaise humeur;* and you will always be showing yourselves off to one another in false colors; do not believe in this; do not believe in evil; wait and all will

[1] The servant.

come right again. I do not know about Sonya, but Ilyá is prone to this and he must be careful about it.

To you, Sonya, I say this: you will suddenly find yourself bored, oh, so bored, so bored, so bored. Do not believe in it, do not give way to it; be assured that it is not boredom but your spirit's simple demand for work, any kind, manual, intellectual, it 's all the same. The chief thing, chiefer than any, is, be kind to people, not kind from a distance, but accessible from near. If that is so, life will be full and happy. Well, stick to it! I kiss you and love you both dearly. I have just heard that Khilkóf [2] is marrying Dzhunkóvski's wife's sister. I do not know her.

At the end of March my father came to Yásnaya himself and stayed there with us until we left for Nikólskoye. We had nobody but an old woman, Márya Afanásyevna, in the house with us; she was very feeble and was already pensioned off, so that we had to do without servants, cook our own dinner, fetch water and do the rooms ourselves.

My father helped us as well as he could, but I must confess, I came to the conclusion that he was extremely little fitted for the Robinson Crusoe life. It is true that he was not at all exacting, and always vowed that everything was first rate. But habit told —he had been accustomed for so many years to a particular order of life, a particular diet, that every departure from that order, even when he was only

[2] This is the well-known Prince Khilkóf who gave up his estates to his peasants, lived as a workman, and helped to settle the Doukhobors in Canada. (Maude's "Life.")

sixty, had a disastrous effect on his health. It happened again and again that when he had gone away quite healthy from home and found himself in new conditions, he came back ill; even when he had been staying with people who knew all his habits and looked after him like a little child.

At the end of April I and my wife went to our farm, and from that time forth I never lived at Yásnaya again, but only went on short visits, either on business, or simply to see my parents. After leaving Yásnaya I and my wife had the following letter from my father:

Did you have a good journey, my dear friends? We are sad and bored without you; that is to say, we are sorry that you are no longer with us. The enclosed telegram has come for you; nothing has been done about it. I expect there 's no harm in that. Write how you have settled in and what your plans are. My health is quite good now. Our Temperance Society is having a great success; a number have signed; one of them, Danilo, has found time to sign and get drunk again since signing. I am not at all alarmed about it; but I wait for you, Ilyá, very anxiously, and shall be glad for your sake when you give up those two nasty habits, alcohol and tobacco, which are outside growths grafted on and do not belong to regular life. Life is no joking matter, especially for you now: every step you take is important. There is a great deal of good in you and Sonya, above all, purity and love; preserve them with all your might; but there are many, many dangers that threaten you both; you do not see them, but I do, and I

COUNTESS TOLSTOY

am afraid. Well, *au revoir*, I kiss you both, and every one sends their love. Write. Every one in Moscow, according to the last letters, is making successful preparations to hurry home. L. T.

The following letter was written by my father in reference to the birth of my first daughter Anna:

I congratulate you, dear and beloved young parents. My congratulation is not a form of words; I was so unexpectedly delighted at hearing of my granddaughter that I want to share my delight and thank you, and I understand your delight. I now look at all girls and women with pity and contempt. What 's this creature? Ah, you should see Anna; she 'll be the genuine thing! But joking apart . . . and yet what I said was not a joke; but in still greater seriousness, this is what I want to say: mind you both bring up this granddaughter, or daughter, wisely: don't make the mistakes that were made with you two, the mistakes of the period. I believe that Anna will be better brought up, less cockered and spoilt with genteelness than you were. How is Sonya? It is terrifying to be waiting and thinking that something may have gone wrong after all. However, everything will be all right, so long as everything is all right in the heart, and that is my chief wish to you. How glad I am that Sófya Alexéyevna [3] is with you; kiss her and congratulate her for me. I kiss you both. L. T.

It was after my marriage, in the spring, that my mother had her youngest son, Vánitchka (Iván). This child, who only lived to be seven and died of

[3] Count Ilyá's mother-in-law.

scarlet fever in 1895, was the darling of the whole family. My mother doted on him and my father loved him as his youngest son with all the strength of a father's and an old man's heart.

To tell the truth, my father had taken very little interest in the upbringing of the two preceding children, my brothers, Andréi and Mikháil. They reached the age for going to school when he was already in full opposition to the method of education which had been applied to the rest of us; so that, not feeling himself capable of directing them as he would have liked in accordance with his convictions, he turned his back on them, washed his hands of them, and never took any active interest in their life or their education.[4] My mother sent them first of all to Polivánof's Gymnase, where I and my brother Lyof had been, and later they were transferred to the Katkóf Lycée.

I think my father regarded Vánitchka as his spiritual successor and dreamed of bringing him up according to his own ideas, in the principles of Christian love and goodness. I knew Vánitchka less than my other brothers and sisters, because I was already living apart while he was growing up, but from what I saw of him I was struck by the remarkably affection-

[4] These two sons took no interest in their father's views; both went into the army; one of them joined the Black Hundred. (Maude's "Life.")

ate and responsive heart that this physically delicate and sickly child had.

Vánitchka was only eighteen months old when my father resolved to give up his landed property, and divided his estate between the members of the family. To Vánitchka, as the youngest, was allotted part of Yásnaya Polyána, with the house and demesne.[5] A more distant part of the estate was allotted to my mother.

My mother told me, after Vánitchka's death, how one day, when she was walking in the garden with him, she explained that all that land was his.

"No, mama, don't say that Yásnaya Polyána is mine!" he said, stamping his foot. "Everything 's every oneses'."

When I received the telegram announcing his death, I went into Moscow at once. My mother told me what my father said after Vánitchka's death: "It is the first irremediable sorrow of my life!" Vánitchka was buried in the village churchyard at Nikólskoye, beyond All Saints, not far from Moscow, where my other little brother Alyósha had been buried before him. When the coffin was lowered into the grave, my father sobbed and said very, very softly, so that I could only just distinguish the words:

[5] According to a custom equivalent to "Borough English." Tolstoy had himself inherited Yásnaya Polyána in the quality of youngest son.

"Taken from the earth, to the earth thou shalt return." [6]

He used these same words in a letter to his brother Sergéi Nikoláyevitch apropos of his brother Nikolái's death in 1860. And since Nikolái's death Vánitchka's was the greatest loss he had ever known.

It has often struck me that if Vánitchka had lived many things in my father's life would very likely have been different. This child, with his insight and responsiveness, might have attached him to his family, and he would never have been haunted by the thought of leaving Yásnaya Polyána. I am encouraged in this supposition by a letter which my father wrote to my mother a year and a half after Vánitchka's death.

Here is the letter, which I give in full:

YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA, June 8th, 1897.

My dear Sonya,

I have long been tormented by the incongruity between my life and my beliefs. To make you change your way of life, your habits, which I taught you myself, was impossible; to leave you has so far also been impossible, for I thought that I should be depriving the children, while they were still young, of the influence, however small, which I might have over them, and should be causing you pain. But to continue to live as I have been living these sixteen years, at one time struggling and harassing you, at an-

[6] "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."—Genesis iii, 19.

THE LAST WALK OF TOLSTOY WITH HIS WIFE, FROM YÁSNAYA POLYÁNA TO KREKSHINO

other yielding to those influences and temptations to which I was accustomed and by which I was surrounded, has also become impossible for me at last; and I have now made up my mind to do what I have long wished to do, to go away; first, because with my advancing years this life grows more and more burdensome to me and I long more and more for solitude; and secondly, because the children have now grown up, my influence is no longer necessary and you all have livelier interests, which will make you notice my absence less.

But the chief reason is, that as the Hindus when they near the sixties retire into the forests, as every religious old man desires to dedicate the last years of his life to God and not to jokes, puns, gossip, and lawn tennis, so I, who am now entering on my seventieth year, long, with all the strength of my spirit, for that tranquillity and solitude and, though not perfect accord, still something better than this crying discord between my life and my beliefs and conscience.

If I did this openly, I should be met with entreaties, reproaches, and arguments, and perhaps I should falter and fail to carry out my resolution, and it has got to be carried out. Please forgive me therefore if this step that I am taking causes you pain; and in your heart, Sonya, above all, let me go of your own free will, do not seek for me, do not find fault with me, do not condemn me.

My leaving you does not mean that I am dissatisfied with you. I know that you could not, literally *could not*, and cannot, see and feel as I do, and therefore you could not and cannot alter your life and make sacrifices for the sake of what you do not believe in. I do not find fault with you; on the contrary I recall, with love and gratitude, the

long thirty-five years of our life together, especially the first half of it, when, with that maternal self-renunciation which is characteristic of you, you bore, so zealously and patiently, with what you thought was your appointed burden. You gave me and the world what you were able to give. You gave much maternal love and self-sacrifice, and I cannot but esteem you for that. But during the latter period of our life, during the last fifteen years, we have fallen away from one another. I can believe that I am to blame, because I know that I have changed, not for my own sake or for the sake of other people's opinion, but because I could not help it. And I cannot blame you for not having followed me, but I thank you and I lovingly recall and always shall recall all that you have given me. Good-by, dear Sonya.

Your loving

LYOF TOLSTOY.

On the envelope was written: "If I make no special resolution about this letter, it is to be handed to S. A.[7] after my death."

This letter did not come to my mother's hands till after my father's death. Later, perhaps, I shall return to this most important document, which explains many questions which are beyond the comprehension of most. I have quoted it here in connection with Vánitchka's death, because it seems to me that there is an undoubted inner connection between the two things. The idea of leaving home cannot have occurred to my father immediately after the death of

[7] Sófya Andréyevna, the Countess.

his son, for at that time, he fully shared with my mother the "fearfully overwrought condition of mind" in which she was.

This is what he wrote on that subject:

> Now that she is suffering I feel more than ever, with all my being, the truth of the words that man and wife are not separate individuals but one. . . . I long intensely to instil into her even a portion of that religious consciousness which I have—although in a slight degree, but still enough to give me the power of rising at times above the sorrows of life—because I know that nothing but that, the consciousness of God and of being his son can give life, and I hope that it may be instilled into her, not by me of course, but by God. Though it is very hard for that consciousness to be awakened in women.

A year and a half later, when the sharpness of my mother's sorrow was beginning to pass, my father felt himself morally freer and wrote the farewell letter I have quoted.

CHAPTER XXII

HELP FOR THE FAMINE-STRICKEN

AFTER the Moscow Census, after my father had come to the conclusion that it was not only useless to help people with money, but immoral, the part he took in distributing food among the peasants during the famines of 1890, 1891, and 1898 may seem to have shown inconsistency and contradiction of thought.

"If a horseman sees that his horse is tired out, he must not remain seated on its back and hold up its head, but simply get off," he used to say, condemning all the charities of the well-fed people who sit on the back of the working-classes, continue to enjoy all the benefits of their privileged position and merely give from their superfluity. He did not believe in the good of such charity and considered it a form of self-hallucination, all the more harmful, because people thereby acquire a sort of moral right to continue their idle aristocratic life and go on increasing the poverty of the people.

In the autumn of 1890 my father thought of writing an article on the famine which had then

spread over nearly all Russia. Although he already knew the extent of the peasantry's disaster through the newspapers and the accounts brought by those who came from the famine-stricken parts, nevertheless, when his old friend Iván Ivánovitch Rayévski called on him at Yásnaya Polyána and proposed that he should drive through to the Dankóvski District with him in order to see the state of things in the villages for himself, he readily agreed and went with him to his property at Begítchevka. He went there with the intention of staying only a day or two; but when he saw what a call there was for immediate measures, he at once set to work to help Rayévski, who had already instituted several kitchens in the villages, in relieving the distress of the peasantry, at first on a small scale and then, when big subscriptions began to pour in from every side, on a continually increasing one. The upshot of it was that he devoted two whole years of his life to the work.

It is wrong to think that my father showed any inconsistency in this matter. He did not delude himself for a moment into thinking he was engaged on a virtuous and epoch-making task, but when he saw the sufferings of the people he simply could not bear to stay comfortably at Yásnaya or in Moscow any longer, but had to go out and help in order to relieve his own feelings.

"There is much about it that is not what it ought to be; there is S. A.'s money[1] and the subscriptions, there is the relation of those who feed and those who are fed. *There is sin without end,* but I cannot stay at home and write. I feel the necessity of taking part in it, of doing something," he wrote from the Province of Ryazan to Nikolái Nikoláyevitch Gay.

At the very outset of his work at Begítchevka he suffered a great sorrow. In November, Iván Ivánovitch Rayévski, who traveled constantly about on business connected with the famine, sometimes to Zemstvo meetings, sometimes among the hamlets and villages, caught cold, took a severe influenza and died. This loss, it seems to me, imposed on my father a moral obligation to continue the work he had begun and carry it through to the end. Rayévski was one of my father's oldest friends. He once had the reputation of being a very strong man and I believe he made my father's acquaintance in Moscow when they both went in for physical culture and attended Poiret the Frenchman's Gymnastic School. I remember him very far back, from my earliest childhood, when he used to visit Yásnaya Polyána and when he was united to my father by sporting interests such as coursing and race horses. This was in the seventies. Later, when my father had quite given up his former hobbies, his friendship with Iván

[1] His wife's.

Ivánovitch still continued, and I think they were never such close friends as during the short space of time when they were drawn together by the general distress and their joint work in coping with it. Rayévski put all his heart into the business, and with his great practicalness and the devoted energy with which he set about it, he was an ideal fellow-worker and comrade for my father.

That winter, owing to bad health I think, my father had to leave Begítchevka for a couple of months and asked me to take his place in the meantime. I got ready to go at once, handed over the management of the famine-relief in the Tchórnski District to my wife and started for Begítchevka. The work established there by my father was on a truly stupendous scale.

I found only one assistant of his on the spot, a Miss P., a woman of splendid energy, with whom I worked all the time. After a time I got the following letter from my father; it was brought by a young lady whom he sent to help us.

Dear friend Ilyúsha,

This letter will be brought you by Miss V., a girl who knows how to work. Let her act as your assistant for the time being; after the 20th when we arrive we will make some other arrangement about her. I am very sorry I did not write to you to come and see me at home first, so as to talk everything over with you. I am very much afraid that from ignorance of the conditions you may make a lot

of mistakes. There is so much that I ought to say that I do not even try to say it, especially as I do not know what you are doing.

One thing I beg: be as careful as you can, carry things out without altering my plans. And above all take care about the purchase and carriage of the corn that comes, and its regular disposal in the granaries, and see that you do not let people into the kitchens who can feed themselves on what they get from the Zemstvo, and on the other hand do not turn away those who are really in need.

It is time to help the poorest with firing. This is a very important and difficult job; and in this case, however undesirable, it is better that those who do not need it should get it than that those who do should not.

What about the hay from Usóf? I am afraid of Yermolayef making a hash of it. They mention scattered trusses. It must be picked up at once and sent to Lébedef at Kolódezi. Look out for potatoes in private stores; see if they won't sell; and buy them. There is much more to say but I cannot settle it by correspondence, not knowing how things are going. I rely on you. Please do all you can. I kiss you. Give my compliments to Eléna Mikháilovna and Natásha and every one there. L. T.

The "helper" who brought me this letter drove in from the station just as I and Miss P. were sitting down to supper. The old carpenter who acted as our manservant threw open the door and said: "The Lord has sent another young lady." And in walked a University girl with a big bottle of Montpassiers under her arm and handed me my father's letter.

TOLSTOY VISITING THE WOMEN'S SECTION OF THE PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL AT POKROF

AMONG THE PATIENTS AND DOCTORS AT THE TROITSA DISTRICT, PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

I offered her a chair and asked her to have some supper.

There was salted cabbage with quass, and black bread on the table.

The unhappy Muscovitess took a look at it, swallowed a couple of spoonfuls and fell into a plaintive silence, looking tenderly at her sweetmeats, as who should say: "I 'm in the famine district now; there 's nothing but cabbage to be had. What ever would have happened if I had n't been bright enough to bring my caramels with me?"

When the cutlets came in, she beamed with delight.

The next day at dawn she asked to be given some work. I gave orders to put in a horse for her and asked her to drive to the village of Gai with a coachman and make a list of all who were being relieved at the public kitchen.

Half an hour later in rushed Dmítry Ivánovitch Rayévski, brother of Iván Ivánovitch, all covered with snow, and ejaculated in a terrified voice:

"What have I seen? There 's a blizzard outside; and a child standing in a sledge, whirling across country all alone. It 's one of the horses from here. Who is it?"

I simply gasped. The girl had gone off without a coachman, Heaven knows where. I had to send a man to look for her, and bring her home.

Another day, as I left the house, I told her to distribute the firewood for the kitchens.[2] All our own firewood was damp, being freshly cut, and we had dry birch-wood sent by rail from the Province of Kalúga expressly as kindling. This wood was very expensive and we set enormous store by it. For every two cords of firewood we allowed only three cubic feet of dry logs. I explained all this to the young lady before I went out.

When I got back, I found to my horror, that she had given out all the dry wood. "They asked for dry," she explained in justification.

"But what are we to do now with our green wood? It won't burn without kindling."

We had to look about and buy dry wood again and pay three times the former price for it.

When my father returned to Begítchevka, I stayed with him for a time and then went back home.

. . . . . .

Six years later I worked again at the same job with my father, in the Tchórnski and Mtsénski districts. After the bad crops of the two preceding years it became clear by the beginning of the winter of 1898 that a new famine was approaching in our neighborhood and that charitable assistance to the peasantry would be needed. I turned to my father for help. By the spring he had managed to collect some money

[2] The ovens being heated with wood, not coal.

and at the beginning of April he came himself to see me.

I must tell you that my father, who was very economical by nature, was extraordinarily cautious and I may say even parsimonious in the administration of charitable funds. It is easily understood, if one considers the unlimited confidence which he enjoyed among the subscribers and the great moral responsibility which he could not but feel towards them. So that before undertaking anything he had to be fully convinced himself of the necessity of help.

The day after his arrival, we saddled a couple of horses and rode out. We rode as we had ridden together twenty years before, when we went out coursing with the greyhounds, that is across country, over the fields. It was all the same to me which way we rode, as I believed that all the neighboring villages were equally distressed, and my father, for the sake of old memories, wanted to revisit Spásskoye Lyutovínovo, which was only six miles from my house; he had not been there since Turgényef's death. On the way I remember his telling me all about Turgényef's mother, who was famous through all the neighborhood for her remarkable intelligence, energy, and eccentricity.[3] I do not know if he ever saw her

[3] Ruling 5,000 serfs like a mad thing, drunk with power, after her husband's death, with perpetual punishments and beatings.

himself, or whether he was only telling me the reports that he had heard.

As we rode across Turgényef's park he recalled in passing how of old he and Iván Sergéyevitch had disputed which park was the finer, Spásskoye or Yásnaya Polyána. I asked him:

"And now which do you think?"

"Yásnaya Polyána *is* the best; though this is very fine, very fine indeed."

In the village we visited the head man's and two or three other cottages, and came away disappointed. There was no famine. The peasants, who had been endowed at the Emancipation with a full share of good land, and had enriched themselves since by wage-earnings, were hardly in want at all. It is true that some of the yards were badly stocked; but there was none of that acute degree of want which amounts to famine and which strikes the eye at once. I even remember my father reproaching me a little for having sounded the alarm when there was no sufficient cause for it, and for a little while I felt rather ashamed and awkward before him.

Of course when he talked to the peasants he asked each of them if he remembered Turgényef and eagerly picked up anything they had to say about him. Some of the old men remembered him and spoke of him with great affection.

Then we left Spásskoye. A mile and a half

TOLSTOY AND DR. MAKOVICKY, HIS PHYSICIAN AND FRIEND

further on we struck on a little hamlet called Pogíbelka,[4] lying neglected and forgotten among the fields. We rode into it. The peasants here told us that they had received a "beggarly" share of the land at the division; it was inconveniently situated, some little way off; and when this spring arrived, things had come to such a pitch that all the eight yards together had only one cow and two horses between them. The rest of their cattle they had sold. Big and little they all went about begging. The next hamlet, Great Gubaryóvka, was just as bad. Further on, it was still worse.

We resolved to open kitchens without delay. We soon had our hands full. The hardest work of all, the finding out the number of mouths to be fed in each family, my father did almost entirely himself, and spent the whole day at it, often till late at night, riding about the villages. The preparation and distribution of provisions was undertaken by my wife. Others came and helped. In a week we had about a dozen kitchens going in the Mtsénski District and the same in Tchórnski. As it was beyond the means at our disposal to feed all the villagers without distinction, we admitted for the most part the children, old men and women, and the sick to the kitchens, and I well remember how my father delighted in arriving in a village at the dinner-hour, and how touched he

[4] The name has an ominous ring: from *pogíbel,* destruction.

was by the reverential, almost prayerful attitude towards the food, which he noticed in those who were fed there.

Unfortunately we did not manage to avoid difficulties with the authorities. The first thing that happened was that two young ladies who had come from Moscow and managed one of our big kitchens were simply turned out, under threat of closing the kitchen. Then the chief constable of the Hundred came and demanded to be shown the permit from the head of the Provincial police to open kitchens. I argued with him that there could not be any law forbidding charity. Of course it was no use.

At that moment my father came into the room and he and the chief constable had a friendly talk, the one arguing that people cannot be forbidden to eat, and the other asking him to put himself in the place of a man under authority who has orders from those above him to obey.

"What would you have me do, Your Excellency?"

"It 's very simple; don't work in a service where you can be made to act against your conscience."

After that, for the sake of keeping the work going, I had to go and see the Governors of Oryól and Tula Provinces and finally send a telegram to the Minister of the Interior begging him "to remove obstacles put by local authorities in way of private charity not forbidden by law." In this way we succeeded in saving

the kitchens already set up, but we were not allowed to open fresh ones. My father left my house to go to the eastern parts of the Tchórnski District, where he wanted to see how the young crops were doing; but he fell ill on the way and spent some days in bed at the house of my friends, the Levitskis. This is a letter he wrote to me and my wife after his departure.

My dear friends Sonya and Ilyá,

Please go on with the work as you have begun it and enlarge it if there is any real necessity. I can send you another £30. I am keeping £150 in reserve, as I wrote to the subscribers, and £200 has not yet come. I have sent off my article and account of expenditure of some £300 odd. Total expenses shown to date, about £2,500. Please, Ilyúsha, send me a detailed account of the rest of the money spent, so that I may send it to the papers. My visit to you has left a delightful impression. I have come to know you both better, understand you and love you. My health is better, but I cannot say that it is good. Am very weak still. L. T.

Many kisses to Ánnotchka and my dear grandchildren. Which of them have gone to Granny's?

CHAPTER XXIII

MY FATHER'S ILLNESS IN THE CRIMEA. ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEATH. DESIRE FOR SUFFERING. MY MOTHER'S ILLNESS.

IN the autumn of 1901 my father was attacked by persistent feverishness and the doctors advised him to spend the winter in the Crimea. The Countess Pánina kindly lent him her villa "Gáspra" near Koreíz and he spent the winter there.

Soon after his arrival he caught cold and had two illnesses one after the other, enteric fever and inflammation of the lungs. At one time his condition was so bad that the doctors had hardly any hope that he would ever rise from his bed again. Although his temperature was very high, he was conscious all the time; he dictated some reflections every day, and deliberately prepared for death. The whole family was with him and we all took turns in nursing him. I look back with pleasure on the nights when it fell to me to be on duty by him, and I sat in the balcony by the open window, listening to his breathing and to every sound in his room. My chief duty, as the strongest of the family, was to lift him up while the

IN THE CRIMEA DURING HIS ILLNESS

sheets were being changed. When they were making the bed I had to hold him in my arms like a child. I remember how my muscles quivered one day with the exertion. He looked at me with astonishment and said:

"You surely don't find me heavy? . . . What nonsense!"

I thought of that day when he had given me such a bad time out riding in the woods as a boy and kept asking: "You 're not tired?"

Another time, during the same illness, he wanted me to carry him downstairs in my arms by the winding stone staircase.

"Pick me up like they do a baby and carry me."

He had not a grain of fear that I might stumble and kill him. It was all I could do to insist on his being carried down in an arm-chair by three of us.

Was my father afraid of death? It is impossible to answer the question in one word. With his tough constitution and physical strength he always instinctively fought not only against death, but against old age. Till the last year of his life he never gave in, but always did everything for himself and even rode on horseback.

It is absurd therefore to suppose that he had no fear of death. It was instinctive with him and highly developed; but he always fought it down.

Did he succeed? I can answer definitely, yes.

During his illness he talked a great deal of death and prepared himself for it firmly and deliberately. When he felt that he was getting weaker he wished to say good-by to everybody, and called us all separately to his bedside, one after the other, and gave his last words of advice to each. He was so weak that he spoke in a half whisper and when he had said good-by to one he had to rest a while and collect his strength for the next.

When my turn came he said as nearly as I can remember: "You are still young and strong and tossed by storms of passion. You have not yet had time to think over the chief questions of life. But this stage will pass. I am sure of it. When the time comes, believe me, you will find the truth in the teachings of the Gospel. I am dying peacefully now, because I have come to know that teaching and believe in it. May God grant you this knowledge soon. Good-by."

I kissed his hand and left the room quietly. When I got to the front door I rushed to a lonely stone tower and there sobbed my heart out in the darkness like a child. . . . Looking round at last I saw that some one else was sitting on the staircase near me also crying. So I said farewell to my father years before his death and the memory of it is dear to me, for I know that if I had seen him when he

lay dying at Astápovo he would have said just the same to me.

To return to the question of death, I will say that so far from being afraid of death, in his last days he often desired it; he was more interested in it than afraid of it. This "greatest of mysteries" fascinated him to such a degree, that his interest came near to love. How eagerly he listened to accounts of the death of his friends, Turgényef, Gay, Leskóf,[1] Zhemtchúzhnikof,[2] and others! He inquired after the smallest minutiæ; no detail, however trifling in appearance, was without its interest and importance for him. In his "Circle of Reading," November 7th, the day he died on, is devoted entirely to thoughts on death. "Life is a dream, death is an awakening," he wrote, while in expectation of that awakening.

Apropos of the "Circle of Reading" I cannot refrain from relating a characteristic incident which I was told by one of my sisters.

When my father made up his mind to compile the collection of the sayings of the wise, to which he gave the name "Circle of Reading," he told one of his friends about it. A few days afterwards this "friend" came to see him again and at once said that he and his wife had been thinking over my father's scheme for the new book and had come to the con-

[1] A novelist, d. 1895. Some of his stories are to be found in Beatrix Tollemache's "Russian Sketches," 1913.

[2] One of the authors of the "Junker Schmidt" collection.

clusion that he ought to call it "For Every Day" instead of "Circle of Reading." To this my father replied that he preferred the title "Circle of Reading," because the word "Circle" suggested the idea of the continuity of the reading, which was what he meant to express by the title. Half an hour later the "friend" came across the room to him and repeated exactly the same remark again. This time my father made no reply. In the evening when the "friend" was preparing to go home, as he was saying good-by to my father, he held his hand in his and began once more: "Still I must tell you, Lyof Nikoláyevitch, that I and my wife have been thinking it over and we have come to the conclusion," and so on, word for word as before.

"No, no, I want to die, to die as soon as possible," groaned my father, when he had seen the "friend" off. "Is n't it all the same, whether it 's 'Circle of Reading' or 'For Every Day'? No, it 's time for me to die; I cannot live like this any longer."

And in the end, one of the editions of the sayings of the wise actually was called "For Every Day" instead of "Circle of Reading."

"Ah, my dear, ever since this Mr. —— turned up, I really don't know which of Lyof Nikoláyevitch's writings are by Lyof Nikoláyevitch, and which are by Mr. ——!" murmured our honest-hearted old

friend, Márya Alexándrovna Schmidt,[3] whom certainly no one who knew her will suspect of malice.

This sort of intrusion into my father's work as an author bore, in the "friend's" language, the modest title of "corrections beforehand" and there is no doubt that Márya Alexándrovna was right, for no one will ever know where what my father wrote ends and where his concessions to Mr. ——'s persistent "corrections beforehand" begin, all the more as this careful adviser had the forethought to arrange that when my father answered his letters he was always to return him the letters they were answers to.[4]

Besides the desire for death which my father displayed, in the last years of his life he cherished another dream which he made no secret of his hope of realizing, and that was the desire to suffer for his convictions. The first impulse in this direction was given him by the persecution to which, during his lifetime, so many of his friends and fellow-thinkers were subjected at the hands of the authorities. When he heard of any one being put in jail or de-

[3] A schoolmistress from St. Petersburg who became a fast friend of the Tolstoys, adopted the peasant life, and settled near Yásnaya. (Maude's "Life.")

[4] The curious may be disposed to trace to some such "corrections beforehand," the remarkable discrepancy of style and matter which distinguishes some of Tolstoy's later works, published after his death by Mr. Tchertkóf and his literary executors, from his earlier works.

ported for disseminating his writings, one felt sorry for him, he was so distressed about it.

I remember my arrival at Yásnaya some days after Gúsef's arrest.[5] I stayed two days with my father and heard of nothing but Gúsef. As if there were nobody in the world but Gúsef! I must confess that, sorry as I was for Gúsef, who was shut up at the time in the local prison at Krapívna, I harbored a most wicked feeling of resentment against my father for paying so little attention to me and the rest of those about him and being so absorbed in the thought of Gúsef. I willingly acknowledge that I was wrong in entertaining this selfish feeling. If I had entered fully into my father's sentiments, I should have seen this at the time.

As far back as 1896, in consequence of the arrest of a lady-doctor, Miss N—— in Tula, my father wrote a long letter to Muravyóf, the Minister of Justice, in which he spoke of the "unreasonableness, uselessness, and cruelty of the measures taken by the Government against those who disseminate these forbidden writings" and begged him to "direct the measures taken to punish or intimidate the perpetrators of the evil, or to put an end to it, against the man whom you regard as the real instigator of it . . . all the more as I assure you beforehand that I shall continue

[5] Tolstoy's private secretary, arrested and banished in 1908. (Maude's "Life.")

without ceasing, till my death, to do what the Government considers evil and what I consider my sacred duty before God."

As every one knows, neither this challenge nor the others that followed it led to any result, and the arrests and deportations of those associated with him still went on. My father felt himself morally responsible towards all those who suffered on his account, and every year new burdens were laid on his conscience.

In 1908, just before his Jubilee,[6] my father wrote to A. M. Bodyánski:

> To tell you the truth, nothing would satisfy me so much, nothing could give me so much pleasure, as actually to be put into prison, into a real good prison—stinking, cold, and "hungry." . . . It would cause me real joy and satisfaction, in my old age, so soon before my death; and at the same time it would save me from all the horrors of the intended Jubilee that I foresee.

And this was written by that same man who had been so enraged at the search instituted at Yásnaya Polyána by the police in 1862,[7] and at being bound over by the visiting magistrate to remain on his estate when our herdsman was gored to death by a bull in

[6] The public celebration of his eightieth birthday.

[7] The search was made in 1862 in consequence of suspicions aroused in the minds of the Police by the establishment of the School. They apparently thought that Tolstoy was engaged in some political conspiracy with the village children.

1872, that both times he wanted to leave Russia, and settle abroad.[8]

. . . . . .

My father endured moments of terrible agony during my mother's dangerous illness in the autumn of 1906. When we heard she was ill, all of us, sons and daughters, assembled at Yásnaya Polyána. My mother had taken to her bed some days before and was suffering from excruciating abdominal pains. Professor V. F. Snegiryóf came at our request and he diagnosed a broken-down internal tumor. In order to verify his diagnosis he proposed that we should summon Professor N. N. Phenoménof from St. Petersburg, for a consultation, but my mother's illness advanced with such rapid strides that early in the morning on the third day after his arrival, Snegiryóf woke us all up and said that he had decided not to wait for Phenoménof because my mother would die unless he operated at once. He went and told my father. My father did not believe that an operation would do any good; he thought that my mother was dying, and he was praying and preparing for her death. He believed that "the great and solemn moment of death had approached; that it was our duty to submit to the

[8] Tolstoy was confined to his estate for two months. The charge preferred against him was of manslaughter by keeping a dangerous bull; but the indictment was withdrawn at the sessions. Tolstoy said he would go to England, which was the only place where a man could be free. (Maude's "Life.")

COUNTESS TOLSTOY DENIED ADMISSION TO THE HOUSE IN ASTÁPOVO, WHERE TOLSTOY WAS LYING IN HIS LAST ILLNESS

will of God, and that any interference on the part of doctors would only impair the grandeur and solemnity of the great act of death." When the doctor asked him in so many words whether he consented to an operation or not, he answered that my mother and her children must decide for themselves, and that he washed his hands of it and would not declare himself either for or against it.

During the operation he retired into the "Thicket," and walked alone in prayer. "If the operation is successful, ring twice on the big bell; and if not . . . No, do not ring at all; I will come myself," he said, changing his mind, and walked slowly away to the wood.

Half an hour later, when the operation was over, I and my sister Masha ran out to look for him. He came towards us, pale with fear.

"Successful! Successful!" we shouted from afar, catching sight of him on the edge of the wood.

"Good, go back, I will come in a minute," he said, in a voice full of suppressed emotion and turned back into the wood again.

A little later, when my mother had recovered from the anæsthetic, he went up to her room, and came out again choking with indignation.

"Great Heavens, what a horrible thing! A human being cannot even be left to die in peace!"

It was not till a few days later, when my mother

was completely restored to health, that he calmed down again and ceased from abusing the doctors for their interference.

CHAPTER XXIV

MASHA'S DEATH. MY FATHER'S DIARY. FAINTING FITS. WEAKNESS.

AS I reach the description of the last days of my father's life I must once more make it clear that what I write is based only on the unrecorded memory of the impressions I received in my periodical visits to Yásnaya Polyána. Unfortunately I have no rich shorthand material to rely on such as Gúsef and Bulgákof had for their Memoirs, and more especially Dushán Petróvitch Makovický,[1] who is preparing, I am told, a big and conscientious work, full of truth and interest.

In November 1906, my sister Masha died of inflammation of the lungs. It is a curious thing, that she vanished out of life with just as little commotion as she had passed through it. Evidently this is the lot of all the pure in heart. No one was particularly astonished by her death. I remember that when I received the telegram, I felt no surprise. It seemed perfectly natural to me. Masha had married a kinsman of ours, Prince Obolénski; she lived

[1] Makovický was the doctor who lived at Yásnaya Polyána, and accompanied Tolstoy in his final flight.

on her own estate at Pirogóvo,[2] 21 miles from us, and spent half the year with her husband at Yásnaya. She was very delicate and had constant illnesses.

When I arrived at Yásnaya the day after her death I was aware of an atmosphere of exaltation and prayerful emotion about the whole family, and it was then I think for the first time that I realized the full grandeur and beauty of death.

I distinctly felt that, by her death, Masha, so far from having gone away from us, had come nearer to us and been, as it were, welded to us forever, in a way that she never could have been during her lifetime. I observed the same frame of mind in my father. He went about, silent and woe-begone, summoning all his strength to battle with his own sorrow; but I never heard him utter a murmur or a complaint, nothing but words of tender emotion.

When the coffin was carried to the church he changed his clothes and went with the cortège. When he reached the stone pillars he stopped us, said farewell to the departed and walked home along the avenue. I looked after him and watched him walk away across the wet thawing snow with his short quick old-man's steps, turning his toes out at a sharp angle as he always did, and never once looking round.

My sister Masha had held a position of enormous

[2] After her Uncle Sergéi's death, "Masha" purchased part of the Pirogóvo estate from his widow.

importance in my father's life and in the life of the whole family.

Many a time, in the last few years, have we had occasion to think of her and to murmur sadly: "If only Masha had been with us. . . . If only Masha had not died."

In order to explain the relations between Masha and my father I must turn back a considerable way. There was one distinguishing and at first sight peculiar trait in my father's character—due perhaps to the fact that he grew up without a mother, or perhaps implanted in him by Nature—and that was that all exhibitions of tenderness were entirely foreign to him. I say "tenderness" in contradistinction to "feeling." Feeling he had, and in a very high degree.

His description of the death of my Uncle Nikolái is characteristic in this connection. In a letter to another brother Sergéi Nikoláyevitch, in which he describes the last day of Nikolái's life, my father tells him how he helped him to undress.[3]

"He submitted and became a different man. . . . He had a word of praise for everybody and said to me, 'Thanks, my friend.' You understand the significance of the words as between us two."

It is evident that in the language of the brothers Tolstoy, the words "my friend" were an expression

[3] Nikolái Tolstoy died of consumption while abroad with Lyof Nikoláyevitch.

of tenderness beyond which imagination could not go. The words astonished my father even on the lips of his dying brother.

During all his lifetime I never received any mark of tenderness from him whatever. He was not fond of kissing children and when he did so in saying good-morning or good-night he did it merely as a duty.

It is easy therefore to understand that he did not provoke any display of tenderness towards himself and that nearness and dearness with him was never accompanied by any outward manifestations. It would never have come into my head, for instance, to walk up to my father and kiss him or to stroke his hand. I was partly prevented also by the fact that I always looked up to him with such awe, and his spiritual power, his greatness, prevented me from seeing in him the mere man, the man who was so pitiable and weary at times, the feeble old man who so much needed warmth and rest.

The only person who could give him that warmth was Masha.

She would go up to him, stroke his hand, caress him, and say something affectionate, and you could see that he liked it and was happy and even returned her caress. It was as if he became a different man with her.

Why was it that Masha was able to do this, while no one else even dared to try? If any other of us

had done it it would have seemed unnatural, but Masha could do it with perfect simplicity and sincerity. I do not mean to say that others about my father loved him less than Masha; not at all; but the display of love for him was never so warm and at the same time so natural with any one else as with her. So that with Masha's death my father was deprived of this natural source of warmth which, with advancing years, had become more and more of a necessity to him.

Another and still greater power that she possessed was her remarkably delicate and sensitive conscience. This trait in her was still dearer to my father than her caresses. How good she was at smoothing away all misunderstandings! How she always stood up for those who were found any fault with—justly or unjustly, it was all the same to her. Masha could reconcile everybody and everything.

When I heard that my father had left his home on the 28th October the first thing that occurred to me was: "If only Masha had been there!"

. . . . . .

During the last years of his life my father's health perceptibly grew worse. Several times he had the most sudden and inexplicable fainting fits, from which he used to recover the next day, but he always lost his memory for the time.

Seeing my brother Andréi's children, who were staying at Yásnaya, in the *zala* one day, he asked with some surprise, "Whose children are these?" Meeting my wife he said: "Don't be offended, my dear, I know that I am very fond of you; but I have quite forgotten who you are"; and when he went up to the *zala* after one of these fainting fits, he looked round with an astonished air and said: "Where 's my brother Mítenka?" [4] a brother who had died fifty years before. The following day all traces of the attack would have disappeared.

During one of these fainting fits my brother Sergéi, in undressing my father, found a little note-book on him. He put it in his own pocket and next day, when he came to see my father, he handed it back to him, telling him that he had not read it.

"There would have been no harm in *your* seeing it," said my father, as he took it.

This little diary, in which he wrote down his most secret thoughts and prayers, was kept "for himself alone" and he never showed it to any one. I saw this book after my father's death. It was impossible to read it without tears.

In spite of the very great interest of these notes written so shortly before his death I will not recite their substance here. I should be sorry to publish what my father wrote "for himself alone." The fact

[4] Dimítri Nikoláyevitch.

PRINCESS OBOLENSKY AND AUNT MASHA

ON THE ESTATE "MESHTCHERSKOE" IN JUNE, 1910

that such a diary was ever kept at all speaks abundantly for itself.

"The real diary" . . . "real" because the rest of the diaries in which he wrote down his abstract impersonal thoughts and spiritual experiences were never put away but lay openly on the table. Every one could read them who wanted to; and people not only read them but some of his "friends" carried them away home with them and copied them out. This was the cause of the silent and stubborn struggle which arose between my mother and the "friends," and which ended in my father's instituting this new diary "of his own." He needed his own Holy of Holies where nobody could intrude; and this diary "of his own" he kept hidden in the leg of his boot.

. . . . . .

The last time I was at Yásnaya Polyána was at the beginning of the autumn. My father welcomed me cordially and affectionately as he always did. Whenever one of his sons arrived he was always delighted and always met us with some cheerful greeting. He would tell me that he had lately dreamt about me, or that I was the very person he was looking out for, because the others had just been there; in fact it always appeared that one's arrival had been timed exactly for the right moment.

Although I was already pretty well accustomed to

my father's indispositions, I was particularly struck by his feebleness this time. And not so much by his physical feebleness as by a certain air of self-concentration and abstraction from the outer world.

I retain a very sad remembrance of this interview. It seemed as if my father were trying to avoid all conversation with me, as if I had offended him in some way. Besides that, I was very much struck by the decay of his memory. Although I had been working already for five years in the Peasants' Bank and he knew that perfectly well—so much so that he had availed himself of an incident I had told him that I had come across at the office for the article that he was writing at the time—he completely forgot all about it on this visit and asked me where I was working and what I was doing. He was very absent-minded in every respect and, as it were, cut off from the rest of the world.

It is curious that the sudden decay of my father's memory displayed itself only in the matter of real facts and people. He was entirely unaffected in his literary work, and everything that he wrote, down to the last days of his life, is marked by his characteristic logicalness and force. It may be that the reason he forgot the details of real life was that he was too deeply absorbed in his abstract work.

. . . . . .

My wife was at Yásnaya Polyána in October and when she got home told me that there was something wrong there: "Your mother is nervous and hysterical; your father is in a silent and gloomy frame of mind." I was very busy with my office-work but made up my mind to devote my first free day to going and seeing my parents. When I got to Yásnaya my father had already left it.

CHAPTER XXV

MY AUNT MASHA TOLSTOY

MY father's only sister, María Nikoláyevna, was a year and a half younger than he was. She had been married to her namesake and distant kinsman Valerián Petróvitch Tolstoy, but that was before my time, and I only remember her as a widow with three children, a son Nikólenka (who died in the seventies), and two daughters, Várya and Lízanka. She owned part of Pirogóvo, where she had her house and farm two miles from her brother Sergéi Nikoláyevitch's demesne. Ever since I can remember, Aunt Masha always came and stayed every year at Yásnaya Polyána, with her children as long as her daughters remained unmarried, and later alone. The last twenty odd years of her life she was a nun in the Shámardino Convent, where she died in the spring of 1912, at the age of eighty-two, a year and a half after my father's death.

In the essential features of her character my Aunt Masha resembled my father in many ways. She had the same brilliant and original intelligence, the same sensitiveness to impressions, the same wonderful

memory, and above all, the same austerity towards herself, admitting of no compromises or half-measures in her perpetual striving after truth. Strange as it may seem, he with his complete disavowal of all rites and ceremonies and she the strictly orthodox nun were united by the same passionate and continual search after God, whom they both loved equally, but whom each worshiped in a different way, according to the measure of their strength and understanding.

My father was always very fond of Aunt Masha and had a subtle understanding of her heart. As he approached extreme old age his sentiment of friendship turned into a profound tenderness, which exhales from all his last letters to her.

"Your brother Lyof, who loves you the more the older he grows," he signs himself in one of his last letters to her, in 1909.

"Your letter touched me almost to the point of tears, both by the love in it and by the real religious feeling which inspires it," he writes in another place, referring to a letter of hers to Dr. Makovický.

It is easy to understand that when my father resolved to forsake Yásnaya Polyána forever, to leave "the life of the world, in order to live out in solitude and peace the last days of my life" he was almost sure to go and see my Aunt Masha, who was the only person capable of understanding the crisis he was

passing through and who could weep with him and give him some peace of mind.

This is my Aunt Masha's own description of her last interview with her brother, given in a letter to my mother dated April 22d, 1911.

Christ is risen![1]

Dearest Sonya, I was very glad to get your letter; I thought that after such sorrow and despair you would not care to be troubled with me, and I was greatly grieved at the thought. I think that, apart from the calamity of losing such a beloved man, you have other reasons for being greatly distressed. You ask me, what inference I have drawn from all that has occurred. How can I tell, out of all the conflicting accounts that I have heard from people about your house, what is true and what is false? Still, I think, as the saying is, that there is no smoke without fire, and there was probably something wrong.

When Lyovótchka arrived here he was terribly downcast at first, and when he told me that you had thrown yourself into the pond he wept outright, and I could not look at him without tears in my eyes. But he told me nothing about you; all he said was that he had come for a long time, and meant to take a peasant's cottage and live here. It seems to me that what he wanted was solitude; he could no longer endure the life of Yásnaya Polyána—he told me so the last time I stayed with you—where all the surroundings were so much at variance with his own convictions; he merely wished to settle down in accordance with his own tastes and to live in solitude, where nobody would interfere with him; that is what I gathered from his

[1] An Easter greeting.

words. Until Sasha's [2] arrival he had no intention of going away, but was preparing to visit the Opta Hermitage and wished without fail to talk with the old Confessor. But Sasha turned everything upside down by her arrival the next day. When he went off that evening to sleep at the hotel he had not the slightest intention of going away, but said to me: "Au revoir, I shall see you to-morrow." Imagine my astonishment and despair when I was awakened at five o'clock the next morning—it was still dark—and told that he was leaving. I got up at once, ordered the carriage and drove to the hotel; but he had gone already, and I saw no more of him.

I do not know what had been passing between you. . . .[3] was certainly much to blame for it, but there must have been some special reason, otherwise Lyof, at his age, could never have brought himself to leave Yásnaya Polyána at night, with such hurried preparations, in weather like that.

I can well believe that it is all very bitter for you, dearest Sonya; but do not reproach yourself; all this has undoubtedly come about by the will of God. His days were numbered and it pleased God to send him this last trial by one of those nearest and dearest to him.

That, dearest Sonya, is all that I have been able to infer from the whole of this astonishing and terrible series of events. He was an extraordinary man, and his end has been extraordinary too. I hope that in return for his love of Christ and his labor with himself to live according to

[2] Sasha, i. e., Alexandra Lvóvna, Tolstoy's daughter. She succeeded her sister "Masha" as her father's secretary, and represents the sterner, more dogmatic, side of Tolstoy's doctrines, as maintained by Tchertkóf.

[3] The gender shows that the name omitted is that of a man.

the Gospel, He, the All-merciful, will not turn him away from Himself.

Dearest Sonya, do not be angry with me; I have written openly all that I thought and felt; I cannot beat about the bush with you; you are too near and dear to me; and I shall always love you, whatever may have happened. He, my beloved Lyovótchka, loved you so too.

I do not know if I shall be in a condition to visit Lyovótchka's grave in the summer; I have grown very feeble since his death. I do not walk at all now; I only drive to the church, my one comfort. Come into retreat at the Convent; open your heart to the old Confessor; he will understand everything and restore your peace of mind. God will forgive all and cover all with His love. Throw yourself at His feet with tears and you will see how peace will establish itself in your heart. Rest assured . . . all this has been the work of the Enemy. Good-by, be well and at peace.

Your loving sister,

MÁSHENKA.

P. S. I live with another nun, but I hardly ever see her; she is always occupied with household duties about the convent.

Where are you staying, Sonya, and what are your plans for the future? Where do you mean to live, and what address am I to send letters to? Three of your sons, all except Lyóva and Mísha, have been to visit me, one after the other; I was very glad to see them indeed; I am very sorry that I do not see more of them. Ilyúsha's wife Sonya came; she was very sweet.

This letter is so full of goodness and really sincere religious feeling that I should have been glad to close

TOLSTOY AND HIS ONLY SISTER, MARÍA NIKOLÁYEVNA, FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS, UNTIL HER DEATH, A NUN IN THE SHÁMARDINO CONVENT

my Reminiscences with it. It is the best view that any one could take of the last events of my father's life.

I paid Aunt Masha a visit some little time after my father's funeral. We sat together in her comfortable little cell, and she repeated to me once more in detail the oft-repeated story of my father's last visit to her.

"He sat in that very arm-chair where you are sitting now: and how he cried!" she said. "When Sasha arrived with her girl-friend, they set to work studying the map of Russia and planning out a route to the Caucasus. Lyovótchka sat there thoughtful and melancholy.

" 'Never mind, papa; it will be all right,' said Sasha, trying to encourage him.

" 'Ah, you women, you women!' answered her father bitterly: 'how can it ever be all right?'

"I so much hoped that he would settle down here; it would just have suited him. And it was his own idea too; he had even taken a cottage in the village," Aunt Masha sadly recalled. "When he left me to go back to the hotel where he was stopping, it seemed to me that he was rather calmer. When he said good-by he even made some joke about his having come to the wrong door. I certainly never could have imagined that he would go away again that same night."

It was a grievous trial for Aunt Masha when the old Confessor Iósif, who was her spiritual director, forbade her to pray for her dead brother, because he had been excommunicated. She was too independent-minded to be able to reconcile herself to the harsh intolerance of the Church and for a time she was honestly indignant. Another priest to whom she applied also refused. Márya Nikoláyevna could not bring herself to disobey her spiritual fathers, but at the same time she felt that she was not really obeying their injunction, for she prayed for him all the same, in thought if not in words. There is no knowing how her internal discord would have ended if her Father Confessor, evidently understanding the moral torment she was suffering, had not given her permission to pray for her brother, but only in her cell and in solitude, so as not to lead others astray.

CHAPTER XXVI

MY FATHER'S WILL. CONCLUSION.

ALTHOUGH my father had long since renounced the copyright in all his works written after 1883, and although, after having made all his real estate over to his children, he had as a matter of fact no property left, still he could not but be aware that his life was far from corresponding with his principles, and this consciousness perpetually preyed upon his mind. One has but to read some of his posthumous works attentively to see that the idea of leaving home and radically altering his whole way of life had presented itself to him long since and was a continual temptation to him.

This was the cherished dream which always allured him but which he did not think himself justified in putting into practice. The life of the Christian must be a "reasonable and happy life *in all possible circumstances*" he used to say as he struggled with the temptation to go away, and gave up his own soul for others.

I remember reading in Gúsef's Memoirs how my father once in conversation with Gusaryóf the peasant, who had made up his mind to leave his home for

religious reasons, said: "My life is a hundred thousand times more loathsome than yours, but yet I cannot leave it."

I will not enumerate all the letters of abuse and bewilderment which my father received from every side, upbraiding him with luxury, with inconsistency, and even with torturing his peasants.[1] It is easy to imagine what an impression they made on him. He said Yes, there was good reason to revile him; he called their abuse "a bath for the soul," but internally he suffered from the "bath" and saw no way out of his difficulties. He bore his cross, and it was in this self-renunciation that his power consisted, though many either could not or would not acknowledge it. He alone, in spite of all those about him, knew that this cross was laid on him not of man but of God; and while he was strong he loved his burden and shared it with none.

Just as thirty years before my father had been haunted by the temptation to suicide, so now he struggled with a new and more powerful temptation, that of flight. A few days before he left Yásnaya he called on María Alexándrovna Schmidt at Ovsyánniki and confessed to her that he wanted to go away.

The old lady threw up her hands in horror and said: "Gracious Heavens, Lyof Nikoláyevitch, have you fallen a victim to *that* weakness?"

[1] That is, in his young days, before the Emancipation of 1861.

When I learnt, on the 28th October, 1910, that my father had left Yásnaya, the same idea occurred to me, and I even put it into words in a letter I sent to him at Shámardino by my sister Sasha. I did not know at the time about certain circumstances which have since made a great deal clear to me that was obscure before.

From the moment of my father's death till now, I have been racking my brains to discover what could have given him the impulse to take that last step. What power could compel him to yield in the struggle in which he had held on so firmly and tenaciously for so many years? What was the last drop, the last grain of sand that turned the scales and sent him forth to search for a new life on the very edge of the grave?

Could my father really have fled from home because the wife with whom he had lived for forty-eight years had developed neurasthenia and at one time showed certain abnormalities characteristic of that malady? Was that like the man who loved his fellows and knew the human heart so well? Or did he suddenly desire, when he was eighty-three, and weak and helpless, to realize the ideal of a pilgrim's life? If so, why did he take my sister Sasha and Dr. Makovický with him? He could not but know that in their company he would be just as well provided with all the necessaries of life as he would

have been at Yásnaya Polyána. It would have been the most palpable self-deception.

Knowing my father as I did, I felt that the question of his flight was not so simple as it seemed to others, and the problem lay long unsolved before me, until it was suddenly made clear by the Will that he left behind him. I remember how, after N. S. Leskóf's death, my father read me out his posthumous instructions with regard to a pauper funeral, no speeches at the grave and so on, and how the idea of writing his own Will then came into his head for the first time.

His first Will was written in his diary, on March 27th, 1895.[2] It is printed in full in the Tolstoy Annual for 1912, and I will therefore give only some extracts here. The first two paragraphs refer to his funeral and the announcement of his death. The third paragraph deals with the sorting out and printing of his posthumous papers, and the fourth, to which I wish to call particular attention, contains a request to his next of kin to transfer the right of publishing his writings to society at large or, in other words, to renounce the copyright of them. "But I only *request* it," the italics are mine, "and do not direct it. It is a good thing to do. And it will be good for you to do it; but if you do not do it, that is your affair. It means that you are not yet ready to

[2] Five weeks after Leskóf's death.

do it. The fact that my writings have been bought and sold during these last ten years has been the most painful thing in my whole life to me."

Three copies were made of this Will and they were kept by my sister Masha, since deceased, by my brother Sergéi, and by Tchertkóf. I knew of its existence, but I never saw it till after my father's death, and I never inquired of anybody about the details of it.

I knew my father's views about authors' copyright and no Will of his could have added anything to what I knew. I knew moreover that this Will was not properly executed according to the forms of law and, personally, I was glad of that, for I saw in it another proof of my father's confidence in his family. I need hardly add that I never doubted that my father's wishes would be carried out. My sister Masha, with whom I once had a conversation on the subject, was of the same opinion.

In 1909 my father stayed with Mr. Tchertkóf at Krékshino, and there for the first time he wrote a formal Will, attested by the signature of witnesses. How this Will was written I do not know, and I do not intend to discuss the point. It afterwards appeared that it was also imperfect from a legal point of view, and in October, 1909, it all had to be done over again.

As to the writing of the third Will we are fully

illuminated by Mr. F. Strakhof,[3] in an article which he published in the St. Petersburg *Gazette* on the 6th of November, 1911.

Mr. Strakhof left Moscow at night. He had calculated on Sófya Andréyevna,[4] "whose presence at Yásnaya Polyána was highly inexpedient for the business on which I was bound," being still in Moscow. The business in question, as was made clear in the preliminary consultation which V. G. Tchertkóf held with N. K. Muravyóf the solicitor, consisted in getting fresh signatures from Lyof Nikoláyevitch, whose great age made it desirable to make sure without delay of his wishes being carried out by means of a more unassailable legal document. Strakhof brought the draft of the Will with him and laid it before Lyof Nikoláyevitch.

"After reading the paper through, he at once wrote under it that he agreed with its purport, and then added, after a pause: 'All this business is very disagreeable to me; and it is quite unnecessary to ensure the propagation of my ideas by taking all sorts of measures. . . . Why, no word can perish without leaving its trace, if it expresses a truth and if the man who utters it believes profoundly in its truth. But all these outward means for ensuring it come only

[3] Not to be confused with N. N. Strakhof.—I. T.
[4] The Countess Tolstoy.

of our disbelief in what we utter.' And with these words Lyof Nikoláyevitch left the study."

Thereupon Mr. Strakhof began to consider what he must do next, whether he should go back with empty hands, or whether he should argue it out. He decided to argue it out, and endeavored to explain to my father how painful it would be for his friends after his death to hear people blaming him for not having taken any steps, in spite of his strong opinion on the subject, to see that his wishes were carried out, and for having thereby helped to transfer his copyrights to the members of his family. My father promised to think it over and left the room again.

At dinner Sófya Andréyevna "was evidently far from having any suspicions." When my father was not by, however, she asked Mr. Strakhof what he had come down about. Inasmuch as Mr. Strakhof "had other affairs in hand besides the above mentioned business," he told her "about one thing and another with an easy conscience," saying nothing, of course, about the chief object of his visit.

Mr. Strakhof goes on to describe a second visit to Yásnaya when he came to attest the same Will as a witness.

When he arrived "the Countess had not yet come down. . . . I breathed again."

When he had finished his business, "as I said good-

by to Sófya Andréyevna I examined her countenance attentively: such complete tranquillity and cordiality towards her departing guests was written on it that I had not the smallest doubt of her complete ignorance of what was going on. . . . I left the house with the pleasing consciousness of a work well done, a work that was destined to have considerable historic consequences. I felt only some little twinge within, certain qualms of conscience about the conspiratorial character of the transaction."

But even this text of the Will did not quite satisfy my father's "friends and advisers"; it was redrafted for the fourth and last time in July, 1910. This last draft was written by my father himself in the Limonóvski Forest, two miles from the house, not far from Mr. Tchertkóf's estate.[5]

Such is the melancholy history of this document, which was destined to have "considerable historic consequences."

"All this business is very disagreeable to me, and it is quite unnecessary," my father said, when he signed the paper that was thrust before him. That was his real opinion about his Will, and it never altered to the end of his days. Is there any need for proof of that? I think one need know very little of his convictions to have no doubt about it. Was Lyof

[5] Tchertkóf had bought a property near Yásnaya Polyana. The Will was written literally out in the woods, among the trees.

Nikoláyevitch Tolstoy likely of his own accord to have recourse to the protection of the law? And, if he did, was he likely to conceal it from his wife and children?

If even an outsider like Mr. Strakhof felt some "twinges" and "qualms of conscience" about the "conspiratorial character of the transaction," what must my father himself have felt? He had been put into a position from which there was absolutely no issue. To tell his wife was out of the question: it would have grievously offended his "friends." To have destroyed the Will would have been worse still: for his "friends" had suffered for his principles, morally, and some of them materially, and had been exiled from Russia.[6] And he felt himself bound to them. And on the top of all this were his fainting fits, his increasing loss of memory, the clear consciousness of the approach of death, and the continually growing nervousness of his wife, who felt in her heart of hearts the unnatural estrangement of her husband and could not understand it. And if she asked him what it was that he was concealing from her, he would either have to say nothing or to tell her the truth. But that was impossible.

What was he to do?

And so it came about that the long-cherished dream

[6] This applies to Tchertkóf who lived for years in England, publishing Tolstoy's political and religious articles.

of leaving Yásnaya Polyána presented itself as the only means of escape. It was certainly not in order to enjoy the full realization of his dream that he left his home; he went away only as a choice of evils. "I am too feeble and too old to begin a new life," he had said to my brother Sergéi only a few days before his departure. Harassed, ill in body and in mind, he started forth without any object in view, without any thought-out plan, merely in order to hide himself somewhere, wherever it might be, and get some rest from the moral tortures which had become insupportable to him.

"To fly, to fly!" he said in his death-bed delirium, as he lay at Astápovo.

"Has papa considered that mama may not survive the separation from him?" I asked my sister Sasha on the 29th of October, when she was on the point of going to join him at Shámardino.

"Yes, he has considered all that and still made up his mind to go, because he thinks that nothing could be worse than the state that things have come to here," she answered.

I confess that my explanation of my father's flight by no means exhausts the question. Life is infinitely complex and every explanation of a man's conduct is bound to suffer from one-sidedness. Besides, there are circumstances of which I do not care to speak at the present moment, in order not to cause

TOLSTOY'S ROOMS AS HE LEFT THEM ON OCTOBER 28TH, 1910

unnecessary pain to people still living. I should like to think that some, at any rate, of those who have been blamed for their part in these transactions were innocent.

If those who were about my father during the last years of his life had known what they were doing, it may be that things would have turned out differently.

. . . . . .

The years will pass. The accumulated incrustations which hide the truth will pass away. Much will be wiped out and forgotten. Among other things my father's Will will be forgotten, that Will which he himself looked on as an "unnecessary, outward means." And men will see more clearly that legacy of love and truth in which he believed so deeply and which, according to his own words, "cannot perish without a trace."

In concluding this chapter I cannot refrain from quoting the opinion of one of my kinsmen, who, after my father's death, read the two diaries kept by my father and by my mother during the autumn before Lyof Nikoláyevitch left Yásnaya Polyána.

"What a terrible misunderstanding!" he said. "Each was a martyr to love for the other; each suffered without ceasing for the other's sake; and then —this terrible ending! It was as if Fate itself had stepped in with some purpose of its own to fulfil."

THE END

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